United Nations A/57/466

General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 October 2002

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 112
**Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003**

# Cases in which incumbents of the posts are being paid at a level other than the one provided for the post

**Report of the Secretary-General***

*Summary*

By paragraph 66 of its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, the General Assembly noted with concern cases in which incumbents of posts were being paid at a level other than the one provided for in the budget, and requested the Secretary-General to provide it with a comprehensive report on the matter at its fifty-seventh session. The present report responds to that request.

* The issuance of the report was delayed due to a need to complete consultations within the Secretariat on the issue of strengthening control over post management.

02-63737 (E) 151002

# I. Introduction

1. By paragraph 66 of its resolution 56/253, the General Assembly noted with concern cases in which incumbents of posts were being paid at a level other than the one provided for in the budget, and requested the Secretary-General to provide a comprehensive report on that matter to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

2. Accordingly, a comprehensive review of post incumbencies, using data of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) available on 1 September 2002, was undertaken in order to identify such cases. All regular budget posts at and above the General Service Principal level, across all duty stations within the Secretariat, were included in the review.

# II. Posts encumbered by staff whose personal grades differ from the level of the posts that they occupy

3. The situation whereby an incumbent of a post is paid at a level other than that of the post that he or she occupies may arise only from a personnel action that places the staff member against a post, the level of which is different from the staff member's personal level. According to the IMIS database on post management, as at 1 September 2002 there were 155 regular budget posts across all budget sections encumbered by staff whose personal grades were lower than the level of the occupied post. This occurrence is not unusual. It reflects decisions by the heads of departments and offices to place, for a limited period of time, staff having sufficient qualifications and experience against the vacant posts, pending the completion of recruitment or placement of staff against those posts in accordance with the procedures of the staff selection system. The need for such temporary placement is usually prompted by the requirements of the approved programme of activities. The number of such cases may vary over time, depending on the overall vacancy situation and the programme priorities of the Organization which require the programme managers to maintain the operational capacity of departments and offices at the necessary level on a constant basis. It may be noted that the number of such cases is low compared to the number of approved regular budgetary posts and, at any given time, varies between 3 and 5 per cent of the number of the p under review.

4. During the review, one case of a post encumb by a staff member whose personal grade was hi than the budgeted level of the post was identi Further examination revealed that this was the resu a decision made by the Secretary-General in 1990 respect to the implementation plan for the promotio staff members whose names had appeared in the promotion register, in accordance with the placer and promotion system in force at that time. promotion of the staff member had not regularized in the budget since 1990 owing to the of an available post. The post occupied by the member was proposed for reclassification in context of the proposed programme budget for biennium 1992-1993 and the proposed progra budget for the biennium 2002-2003, but the prop was never approved.

5. The above-mentioned case is an exception represents a decision taken by the Secretary-Gen within the context of his prerogatives responsibilities as Chief Administrative Officer of Organization under the Charter of the United Nati Such a decision either reflects a need to main transparency in the application of the Organizati norms and procedures vis-à-vis staff, or responds unique situation arising from the Organizati priorities. In the latter case, efforts are always mad identify a vacant post of the required level within staffing table of the Secretariat and to utilize it temporary basis to accommodate the decision until situation is rectified in accordance with the establis procedures.

# III. Control mechanisms

6. At present, the IMIS functionalities on management and human resources manager provide for sufficient safeguards against error i abuse of the established administrative procedu Posts against which staff may be placed are n available in IMIS on the basis of approved staf tables. This procedure ensures that each and every is linked to a funding source, in accordance with programme of work approved in the budget. regular budgetary posts, this procedure is automa The exceptions to automated placement are proce manually when the post level does not correspon

the staff member's grade. In such exceptional cases, the data entry and its approval in IMIS are limited to the authorized officials, in line with the system's security standards. When a staff member is assigned to a post budgeted at a grade level that is different from that of the staff member, IMIS sends a warning message to the user. The administrative action for the placement of the staff member against the post can, however, be continued without an error condition being raised by the system, subject to approval of the action by the official to whom such responsibility is delegated. This is the point at which administrative control and accountability become critical.

7. Following the review undertaken in the context of the present report, steps are being taken to increase the level of control in IMIS and to limit further the number of authorized officials responsible for the approval of post availability actions processed in IMIS in cases when the staff member's level is different from that of the post. In this context, the responsibility for approving the availability of a post in IMIS in cases when the staff member's level is higher than that of the post against which that staff member is placed is being removed from the programme managers.

## IV. Conclusions and recommendations

8. **Based on the findings of the review of post management, it appears that the IMIS and administrative control mechanisms currently in place in general provide safeguards against error in or abuse of the administrative procedures. Further steps are being taken to strengthen the control mechanisms.**

9. **The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present report.**

United Nations A/57/467

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 October 2002

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 112
**Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003**

# Construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago

## Report of the Secretary-General*

*Summary*

The present report contains proposals for the construction of the required additional office space at the United Nations compound in Santiago. The additional office space is required to relocate staff currently occupying sub-standard offices which are unsafe and do not provide for adequate working conditions.

In accordance with the Joint Inspection Unit recommended procedure on building construction (see A/36/297) endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/237 of 21 December 1982, the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in submitting the related proposal to the Assembly has been sought. Upon review of the construction proposal, in its letter of 10 September 2002 to the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee has concurred with the Secretary-General's intention to submit a proposal to the Assembly for the construction of three new modules to the existing building, which would result in an additional space capacity of 733 $m^2$.

The construction costs ($736,900) could be financed from within the available balance of the construction-in-progress account which the General Assembly, by its decision 55/467, taken at its 98th plenary meeting, held on 12 April 2001, decided to retain in the account pending its consideration of all related matters, in accordance with the procedure established by resolution 37/237.

The General Assembly is requested to authorize the construction of additional office space at Santiago utilizing existing resources available within the construction-in-progress account.

* The delayed submission of the present report is due to the need to undertake the procedures required by General Assembly resolution 37/237. These were completed only in September 2002.

02-63803 (E) 181002

# I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with the procedures outlined in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/36/643) on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on building construction procedures of the United Nations organizations (A/36/297) and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/237 of 21 December 1982.

2. The report presents the Secretary-General's proposal for the construction of the required additional office space at the United Nations compound in Santiago. The additional office space is required to relocate staff currently occupying sub-standard temporary offices which are not in compliance with safety standards and do not provide adequate working conditions. The proposal was reviewed by the Advisory Committee. Upon that review, the Advisory Committee has concurred in the submission to the Assembly of the proposal for construction of a new office building at the compound.

# II. Review of existing facilities and space requirements at the United Nations premises in Santiago

3. The compound of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is located on the left bank of the Mapocho River on 5.45 hectares of land donated to the United Nations by the Chilean Government (annex 1). The total gross space of the compound amounts to 19,334 $m^2$, distributed among the following buildings:

| *ECLAC buildings* | | *Total space ($m^2$)* |
|---|---|---|
| (i) | Main Building | 13 878 |
| (ii) | Documentation and Research Centre (CLADES building) | 1 540 |
| (iii) | Auditorium and external services | 922 |
| (iv) | North Building | 2 037 |
| (v) | Printing facilities | 957 |
| | **Total** | **19 334** |

4. The distribution of the total space of 19,334 $m^2$ according to the functional requirements is as follows:

| *Functional use* | | *Amount of space ($m^2$)* |
|---|---|---|
| (i) | Private office space | 4 592 |
| (ii) | Common space used for open office space, archives, classrooms, conference rooms and office equipment | 8 165 |
| (iii) | Distribution halls and circulation corridors | 5 377 |
| (iv) | Space occupied by tenant entities | 1 200 |
| | **Total** | **19 334** |

5. The Main Building was inaugurated in 1966. Given its architectural design and features it was declared a historic monument by Chilean law. The building is formed by a main construction integrated by an "anillo" (i.e. a ring) with four units that join through connecting bridges to form an open inside square space. The ring serves as the principal office space of the complex. There are several separate elements below the ring and/or temporary office facilities that have been added to the building throughout the years. Suspended pedestrian bridges divide the interior court of the ring into four quadrants. Three of these quadrants are occupied by internal courtyards and the fourth (the south-east quadrant) hosts the main conference facilities. The gross space of the Main Building amounts to 13,878 $m^2$, distributed according to the following functional needs:

| *Functional use* | *Amount of space ($m^2$)* |
|---|---|
| (i) Private office space | 3 112 |
| (ii) Common space used for open office space, archives, classrooms, conference rooms and office equipment | 5 197 |
| (iii) Distribution halls and circulation corridors | 4 369 |
| iv) Space occupied by tenant entities* | 1 200 |
| **Total** | **13 878** |

* Includes space occupied by the bookstore, travel agency, bank, gift shop, staff association and association of United Nations retirees. These areas are of a sub-standard quality. They are not suitable for use as office space.

6. The Documentation and Research Centre was an addition to the compound built by the organization in 1975. The Centre currently houses several organizational units of the ECLAC secretariat. The total area of this building is 1,540 $m^2$, distributed as follows:

| *Functional use* | *Amount of space ($m^2$)* |
|---|---|
| (i) Private office space | 530 |
| (ii) Common space used for open office space, archives, classrooms, conference rooms and office equipment | 520 |
| (iii) Distribution halls and circulation corridors | 490 |
| **Total** | **1 540** |

7. The Auditorium was built in 1984 as the replacement of a provisional structure used for staff activities, which was destroyed by the flooding of the ECLAC compound in 1982. The construction was financed by the insurance settlement for the destroyed structure supplemented by a contribution from the Staff Association. The Auditorium is currently used for official purposes and for staff activities. The external services facilities were built in 1993. This structure is located at the western side of the compound and mainly consists of a storage space and a dining room.

8. The North Building was originally designed as a modular E-shape building. The present part of it was built in phases in 1989 and 1990. During those phases, eight of the designed 11 modules were built. The printing facilities, connected to the

building, were constructed at that time. These facilities currently accommodate the ECLAC Population Division, the Documents and Publications Division and the printing plant. The distribution of space in these two structures is as follows:

| *Functional use* | *Amount of space (m²)* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *North Building* | *Printing facilities* | *Total* |
| (i) Private office space | 911 | 40 | 951 |
| (ii) Common space used for open office space, archives, classrooms, conference rooms and office equipment | 730 | 883 | 1 613 |
| (iii) Distribution halls and circulation corridors | 396 | 34 | 430 |
| **Total** | **2 037** | **957** | **2 994** |

9. With regard to the North Building, the first eight modules of that building were built for two reasons: (a) to accommodate the staff of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE), previously located in adjacent premises rented from the European Southern Observatory; and (b) to mitigate the consequences of an earthquake (1985) and flood (1986) which significantly damaged ECLAC premises. It should be recalled that a series of technical studies by outside consultants and by Headquarters undertaken at that time concluded that, as a result of the earthquake and flood, the temporary office space under the ring of the Main Building could no longer provide safe conditions for staff occupying that space. Following the proposal by the secretariat, a decision had been taken to erect a separate office premises to solve those problems (see A/C.5/41/15 and A/CN.1/R.1081). The construction of the first eight modules of the North Building was financed from various sources, including contributions from France and Canada and from the United Nations Population Fund and the regular budget.

10. The eight modules constructed in 1989 and in 1990, totalling 2,037 $m^2$ of gross space, were sufficient at that time to resolve the problem of CELADE and the relocation of staff from the unsafe temporary offices. However, owing to a progressive increase in the number of personnel, some substantive staff continued to occupy those offices. The shortage of office space became more acute in the late 1990s. Following the reduction of regular budget posts implemented during the biennium 1996-1997, the Commission changed its working methods and increased the involvement of affiliated personnel in the implementation of substantive programmes. This category of personnel includes consultants, individual contractors and interns working on ECLAC premises on various projects of the substantive programmes. As intended, that measure introduced greater flexibility, but, as a result, the number of affiliated personnel was significantly expanded. At present, this category of personnel represents some 270 to 280 individuals working on the premises at any given time. This personnel requires office space accommodation in the same way as do regular staff.

11. At present, two divisions of the secretariat, the Environment and Human Settlements Division and the Natural Resources and Infrastructure Division, occupy those temporary offices under the ring of the Main Building, representing a total gross space of 608 $m^2$. They comprise 20 Professional and 12 General Service staff and 31 affiliated personnel. In terms of working conditions, the temporary offices do

not provide proper ventilation, heating and air-conditioning. From the point of view of safety, these offices do not comply with the local safety codes. Relocation of the aforementioned two organizational units from the temporary offices is a matter of necessity owing to a growing concern about the safety of the personnel working in those offices.

## III. Proposals for resolving the office space problem and related cost estimates

12. Construction of the remaining three modules as an extension to the North Building, representing a net addition of office space of 733 $m^2$, is proposed to address the aforementioned problem. From the point of view of original architectural design, these three modules would complete the implementation of the "E" shape formation of the North Building (annex II). This extension to the present building would allow for relocation of the staff and affiliated personnel from the sub-standard temporary offices and would improve the working conditions of other staff. The temporary offices would then be dismantled and normal safety conditions would be restored.

13. Of the 733 $m^2$ of gross space in those three modules, gross space in the amount of 615 $m^2$ would be required for relocation of the occupants of the temporary offices, based on average standard office space requirements of 9.76 $m^2$ per individual, determined on the basis of the present composition of the ECLAC secretariat in Santiago and of the office space standards approved by the General Assembly in its decision 31/425 of 22 December 1976 on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in document A/31/8/Add.4. The remaining 118 $m^2$ of gross space would serve as swing space.

14. The total duration of the construction is estimated to be 14 months, including 5 months for a detailed design, cost plan preparation, construction bidding exercise and the contract finalization plus nine months for the mobilization and construction stages.

15. The total estimated costs for the construction of the extension to the North Building would amount to $736,900, broken down as follows:

| *Breakdown of costs* | | *United States dollars* |
|---|---|---|
| (i) | Construction costs for 733 $m^2$ structure at $420/$m^2$ on average | 308 000 |
| (ii) | Design, cost plan and consultancy services (10 per cent of construction costs) | 30 800 |
| (iii) | Site work, utilities connections, technology backbone, local area network/wide area network (LAN/WAN), enhanced security, fire safety, back-up power, etc., at $156/$m^2$ on average | 114 300 |
| (iv) | Workstations and office, conference and file rooms furniture and equipment | 84 600 |
| (v) | Project coordination, supervision and management by ECLAC | 82 800 |
| (vi) | Contingencies (10 per cent) | 62 000 |
| (vii) | Provision for inflationary increases | 54 400 |
| | **Total** | **736 900** |

16. It should be noted with regard to the unit costs of $420/m^2$ and $156/m^2$ utilized to calculate the total costs of the project that those amounts represent the current average local construction market prices for construction in Santiago.

17. It should also be noted with regard to the provision of $84,600 for office furnishing that it is foreseen to provide for new office and conference room furniture and new equipment for filing rooms in the new premises. The related costs are based on average costs of $2,600/staff.

18. The ECLAC local project coordination, supervision and administration costs have been estimated in the amount of $82,800. These costs are based on estimated needs for 12 work-months of temporary assistance funds equivalent to salaries at the P-3 level. These resources would be supplemented, as required, by the existing expertise of ECLAC.

19. The recosting component ($54,400) has been estimated on the basis of projected inflation rates of 3.9 per cent annually and the progressive weakening of the Chilean peso from 570 pesos per United States dollar in 2001 to 700 pesos per United States dollar.

## IV. Administrative and funding arrangements for the construction project

20. The administrative arrangements for the construction project would be in accordance with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (see A/36/643 and A/38/7/Add.2, para. 25) for such projects to be centrally managed. Such responsibility would thus be assigned to the Office of Central Support Services of the Secretariat at Headquarters. It would be exercised from within the available resources of the Office. Furthermore, corresponding arrangements would be established for local management of the project, as well as for a liaison unit and supervision of quantity surveyors and other essential personnel, as well as liaison and coordination with local authorities. For that purpose, a provision equivalent to 12 work-months of expertise at the P-3 level would be required at the ECLAC secretariat for the duration of the project. The costs of these requirements are detailed in paragraph 18 above.

21. It is envisaged to organize two competitive bids for the implementation of this project: one for the design of the new modules and the other for the actual construction of the building. It is foreseen to retain the services of the company selected to design the project to supervise the construction work as a guarantee to achieve the best project implementation. In that case, the selected company will not be allowed to participate in the bidding process for the construction work. In its supervisory capacity, the selected company will work in close coordination with the ECLAC secretariat.

22. It will be recalled that, in his report to the General Assembly on the construction of additional conference facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa (A/56/672), the Secretary-General advised the Assembly of the balance under the construction-in-progress account that remained upon completion of the previous projects. On 30 June 2002, the balance of the construction-in-progress account increased to the amount of $8,753,000, owing to credited

additional investment income. It should also be recalled that, by its resolution 56/270 of 27 March 2002, the Assembly has already approved utilization of an amount of $7,711,800 for the construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Adaba, to be financed within the available balance of the construction-in-progress account.

23. The unutilized balance of the construction-in-progress account would thus amount to $1,041,200. It appears that the new construction project at Santiago could be financed in its entirety from within the available unutilized balance of the construction-in-progress account.

## V. Recommendations

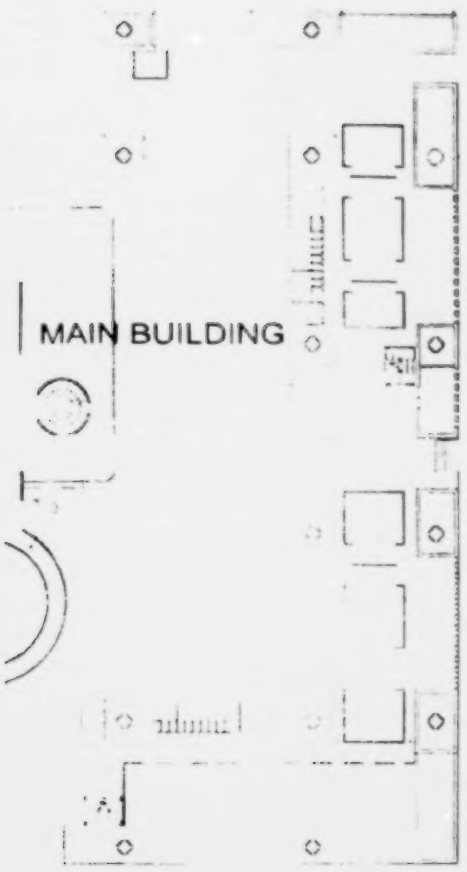
24. **The General Assembly is requested to authorize:**

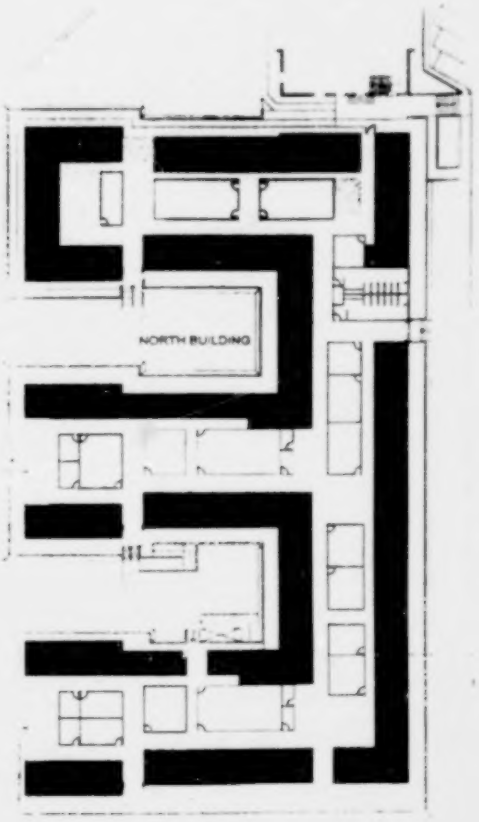
(a) **The construction of three new modules as an extension to the North Building at the United Nations compound in Santiago for a total gross space capacity of 733 $m^2$;**

(b) **Funds to finance the total estimated costs of the construction of $736,900, to be met from within the available balance of the construction-in-progress account.**

# Annex I

**Annex II**



United Nations A/57/468

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 October 2002

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 41 (a)
**Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s**

# Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

## Note by the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit to the General Assembly, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 56/218 of 21 December 2001, the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

## I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 56/218 of 21 December 2001, the General Assembly decided to establish an ad hoc committee of the whole of the General Assembly to conduct the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and related initiatives. The General Assembly also decided to convene an organizational session of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole in June 2002 for one working day in order to consider and adopt the necessary arrangements for its work. It also decided that the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole should meet in substantive session for a period of five working days, from 9 to 13 September 2002, and for three working days, from 7 to 9 October 2002, during its fifty-seventh session.

02-63730 (E) 141002

# II. Organizational matters

## A. Dates of the substantive session

2. At the organizational session, on 14 June 2002, given the fact that the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly was due to open on 10 September 2002, it was suggested that the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole should meet in substantive session for three working days, from 24 to 26 September 2002, and for five working days, from 7 to 11 October 2002. This proposal was later adopted by the General Assembly, in its resolution 56/508 of 27 June 2002.

## B. Officers

3. At the same meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee elected the following officers by acclamation:

*Chairman*:
Jan **Kavan** (Czech Republic)

*Vice-Chairmen*:
Jean **de Ruyt** (Belgium)
Vijay K. **Nambiar** (India)
Dumisani Shadrack **Kumalo** (South Africa)

*Rapporteur*:
Marcel Fortuna **Biato** (Brazil)

## C. Opening and the duration of the substantive session

4. The Ad Hoc Committee held its substantive session at United Nations Headquarters from 24 to 26 September 2002 and from 7 to 11 October 2002. In the course of its session, the Ad Hoc Committee held 10 plenary meetings, including 2 meetings for panel discussions.

5. The Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs acted as the substantive secretariat, while the Disarmament and Decolonization Affairs Branch of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management provided management support to the Ad Hoc Committee.

6. The substantive session of the Ad Hoc Committee was chaired by the President of the General Assembly, Jan Kavan (Czech Republic), who made a statement.

## D. Agenda

7. At the 1st meeting of its substantive session, on 24 September 2002, the Ad Hoc Committee adopted its provisional agenda (A/AC.251/10), as follows:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda.

3. Presentation of the report of the independent evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

4. Interactive discussions.

5. Presentation of the report of the Secretary-General on the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

6. Oral summary of the informal panel discussions.

7. General debate.

8. Consideration of draft resolution.

9. Adoption of the draft resolution.

10. Adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee.

11. Other business and closing of the meeting.

### E. Documentation

8. The Ad Hoc Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Provisional agenda (A/AC.251/6);

(b) Organization of work for the substantive session (A/AC.251/7);

(c) Independent evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s: executive summary (A/AC.251/8);

(d) Independent evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (A/AC.251/9);

(e) Agenda (A/AC.251/10);

(f) Participation of observer States, intergovernmental bodies and non-governmental organizations (A/AC.251/CRP.1);

(g) African Union assessment of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (A/AC.251/CRP.2).

## III. Organization of work

9. At its 1st and 2nd meetings, on 24 September 2002, the Ad Hoc Committee held panel discussions and an interactive dialogue on the independent evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, with the participation of the group of eminent personalities. The panel discussions were moderated by the Vice-Chairman, Jean de Ruyt (Belgium). Kwesi Botchwey (Ghana), Alexander Love (United States of America), Dennis Benn (Jamaica), Valery Mongbe (Benin) and Yves Berthelot (France) made presentations on major findings, lessons learned and the way forward for international support for Africa.

10. At its 3rd meeting, on 25 September, the Committee heard two presentations: the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Jean de Ruyt, presented an oral summary of the panel discussions and follow-up interactive dialogue; and Yvette Stevens, Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, introduced the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/156).

11. In connection with the presentation of the oral summary of the interactive dialogue and the report of the Secretary-General, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, Jan Kavan, made a statement.

12. During the general debate, which was held on 25 and 26 September 2002, the representatives of the following countries made statements: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, China, Cuba, Denmark (on behalf of the European Union, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, as well as Norway), Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Grenada, India, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland, United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, United States of America and Zambia.

13. General statements were also made by representatives of the following organizations and specialized agencies: the African Union, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the World Bank, the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Economic Commission for Africa.

14. The representative of the Network Movement for Justice and Development of Sierra Leone made a statement on behalf of the community of non-governmental organizations.

# IV. Decisions

## A. Decision adopted by the Ad Hoc Committee

15. At its 1st meeting, on 24 September, the Committee considered and adopted decision I, entitled "Modalities of participation of accredited non-governmental organizations in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole in charge of the final review of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s", as follows:

> The Ad Hoc Committee decides:
>
> 1. To grant participation to the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and other non-governmental organizations that have been contributing to the implementation of the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, in conformity with established rules and accepted practices.

2. That representatives of these organizations will be allowed:

(a) To participate in any open meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee;

(b) To make statements at the plenary meetings, given the availability of time, in accordance with current United Nations practice;

(c) To receive copies of official documents and make written or other presentations. Written presentations shall not be issued as official documents except in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31. Furthermore, the non-governmental organizations' report, entitled "African civil society organizations and development: re-evaluating for the twenty-first century", will be considered as an additional background document and will be made available to delegations in accessible areas designated by the Secretariat.

3. That the above modalities shall in no way create a precedent for other ad hoc committees of the General Assembly.

16. The following nine non-governmental organizations were granted accreditation with the Ad Hoc Committee: Femme Afrique Solidarité; Trickle Up Program Inc; Partnership Africa Canada; Network Movement for Justice and Development; Country Women Association of Nigeria (COWAN); Coalition des familles dans la lutte contre VIH/SIDA et la lutte contre la pauvreté; Groupement d'initiative des paysannes de Bogso; Pride Africa microfinance; World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA).

## B. Draft decision recommended for adoption by the General Assembly

17. At its 10th meeting, on 11 October, the Ad Hoc Committee decided to request the General Assembly to authorize the Committee to hold an additional meeting (see para. 18 below).

# V. Recommendations

18. The Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

### One additional meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

*The General Assembly* authorizes the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s to hold one additional meeting, subject to availability of services, on an exceptional basis, in order to complete the work of the Committee.

19. The Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

[The text of the draft resolution will appear in Part II of the report.]

## VI. Adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee

20. At the 10th meeting, on 11 October, the Rapporteur, Marcel Fortuna Biato (Brazil), introduced the draft report of the Ad Hoc Committee (A/AC.251/L.3).

21. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the draft report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session (A/AC.251/L.3), as orally amended.

United Nations A/57/468/Add.1

General Assembly

Distr.: General
17 October 2002

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 41 (a)
**Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s**

# Final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

## Note by the Secretary-General

### Addendum

Transmitted herewith is Part II of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

02-66061 (E) 301002

# Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (Part II)

## I. Introduction

1. The Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s resumed its work and held one formal meeting on 17 October 2002, under the Chairmanship of Dumisani Shadrack Kumalo (South Africa), Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

## II. Adoption of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee

2. At the 11th meeting, on 17 October, the Committee adopted Part II of its report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session (A/AC.251/L.3/Add.1), as orally amended during the discussion.

## III. Recommendations

3. The Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

### Final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development

*The General Assembly*,

*Recalling* its resolution 46/151 of 18 December 1991, the annex to which contains the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s,

*Also recalling* its resolutions 48/214 of 23 December 1993 and 49/142 of 23 December 1994 on the New Agenda, resolution 51/32 of 6 December 1996 on the mid-term review of the implementation of the New Agenda and resolution 55/216 of 21 December 2000, in which it reaffirmed its decision to conduct in 2002 the final review and appraisal of the New Agenda,

*Further recalling* its resolution 56/218 of 21 December 2001, by which it established the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Final Review and Appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s to conduct, during the fifty-seventh session of the Assembly, the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the New Agenda and related initiatives on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General on the independent high-level quality evaluation, as well as on proposals by the Secretary-General on the modalities of the United Nations future engagement with

the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and resolution 56/508 of 27 June 2002, by which it decided that the Ad Hoc Committee should meet in substantive session for three working days, from 24 to 26 September 2002,

*Mindful* of its resolution 56/511 of 15 August 2002, by which it decided on the organization of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to consider how to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development,

*Bearing in mind* the Ministerial Declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of July 2001 of the Economic and Social Council, on the role of the United Nations system in supporting the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development,[1]

*Cognizant* of the link between the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[2] in which the international community committed itself to addressing the special needs of Africa, and of the need to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those set out in the Millennium Declaration,

*Mindful* of the Brussels Plan of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,[3] the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS,[4] the Doha Ministerial Declaration,[5] the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development[6] and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,[7]

*Having considered* the report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly for the Final Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s,[8]

*Noting with satisfaction* the contribution made by individual Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee,

*Also noting with satisfaction* that the Group of Eight, at its summit meeting held at Kananaskis, Canada, in June 2002 devoted part of its deliberations to the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which resulted in the adoption of a Group of Eight action plan for Africa,

---

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/56/3/Rev.1), chap. III, para. 29.

[2] Resolution 55/20.

[3] A/CONF.191/11.

[4] Resolution S-26/2, annex.

[5] See A/C.2/56/7, annex.

[6] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[7] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (A/CONF.199/20), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[8] A/57/468 and Add.1.

## I
## Final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General on the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s,[9] in particular the lessons learned about the New Agenda, as well as recommendations and proposals on the modalities for the future engagement of the United Nations with the New Partnership for Africa's Development;

2. *Takes note* of the report of the independent evaluation on the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s;[10]

3. *Expresses* its disappointment at the limited progress made in realizing the objectives of the New Agenda;

4. *Decides* to bring the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s to a close, and endorses the recommendation of the Secretary-General that the New Partnership for Africa's Development, as decided by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its thirty-seventh ordinary session, held at Lusaka from 9 to 11 July 2001, should be the framework within which the international community, including the United Nations system, should concentrate its efforts for Africa's development;

## II
## Support for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

5. *Welcomes* the New Partnership for Africa's Development, as a programme of the African Union that embodies the vision and commitment of all African Governments and peoples for peace and development;

6. *Reaffirms* its commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development,[11] adopted at the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to consider how to support the New Partnership held on 16 September 2002, and takes note of the deliberations that took place on that occasion;[12]

7. *Urges* the international community and the United Nations system to organize support for African countries in accordance with the principles, objectives and priorities of the New Partnership in the new spirit of partnership;

8. *Recognizes* the importance and strongly encourages the involvement of the private sector and civil society in the implementation of the New Partnership;

## III
## Action by African countries and organizations

9. *Welcomes* the commitment of African countries to integrate the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development into their national policies and

---

[9] A/57/156 and Corr.1

[10] A/AC.251/9.

[11] Resolution 57/2.

[12] A/57/PV.10-11.

development planning frameworks, to maintain full ownership and leadership in developing and utilizing such policies and frameworks, and to mobilize domestic resources in support of the New Partnership;

10. *Also welcomes* the commitment of African countries to peace, security, democracy, good governance, human rights and sound economic management, as well as their commitment to take concrete measures to strengthen mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution as embodied in the New Partnership, as an essential basis for sustainable development in Africa and, in this context, welcomes the ongoing efforts of African countries to further develop the African peer review mechanism which is an important and innovative feature of the New Partnership;

11. *Recognizes* the importance of establishing national focal points for the New Partnership within the governmental structures of African countries, with responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the New Partnership at the national level, serving as a repository of information, and fostering a coordinated response to the New Partnership by individual countries;

12. *Emphasizes* the need to build and strengthen human and institutional capacities at the national, subregional and regional levels in order effectively to implement the New Partnership in all its aspects, and the need to allocate resources to this end;

13. *Encourages* the further integration of the priorities and objectives of the New Partnership into the programmes of the regional economic communities of Africa and other subregional and regional structures and organizations, as well as programmes in favour of the African least developed countries;

14. *Also encourages* efforts to raise awareness of the New Partnership and to involve all African stakeholders, namely Governments, the private sector and civil society, including women's organizations as well as community-based organizations, in the implementation of the New Partnership;

15. *Welcomes* the commitment of African countries to promote and enhance the role of African women in all aspects of the implementation of the New Partnership and in achieving the objectives thereof;

## IV
## Action by the international community

16. *Urges* the developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts towards achieving the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product as official development assistance to developing countries, as internationally agreed, to implement effectively their commitment on official development assistance to the least developed countries, as contained in paragraph 83 of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010[3] and to commit a significant share of such assistance to African countries, encourages developing countries to build on the progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively in helping to achieve development goals and targets, and underlines the importance of undertaking an examination of the means and time frames for achieving the goals and targets;

17. *Stresses* the need to find a durable solution to the problem of external indebtedness of the heavily indebted poor countries in Africa, including through debt cancellation and other arrangements and, in this regard, also stresses the need to explore innovative mechanisms to address comprehensively the debt problem of low and middle-income African countries, bearing in mind that external debt relief can release resources that could be utilized in the successful implementation of the New Partnership for African Development, taking into account initiatives that have been taken to reduce outstanding indebtedness and the need to pursue vigorously and expeditiously debt relief measures, including within the context of the Paris Club and London Club and other relevant forums;

18. *Recognizes* the essential role of trade as an engine for economic development in Africa and, in this regard, calls for improved market access for African exports within the framework of the Doha Ministerial Declaration,[5] without prejudging the outcome of the negotiations of the World Trade Organization, and also within the framework of preferential agreements and in this regard, calls upon developed countries to assist African countries in improving their capacity, including by the removal of supply-side constraints and the promotion of diversification which is critical to enabling them to take full advantage of such opportunities, taking into account the need to provide market access for developing countries;

19. *Calls upon* developed countries that have not yet done so to work towards the objective of duty-free and quota-free access for all exports of the least developed countries, as envisaged in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,[3] adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries at Brussels on 20 May 2001;

20. *Also calls upon* developed countries to encourage and facilitate investment by their private sectors in Africa, to help African countries to attract investments and promote the policies conducive to attracting investment, to encourage and facilitate the transfer of the needed technology to African countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, and to assist in building human and institutional capacities for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development consistent with its priorities and objectives;

21. *Further calls upon* developed countries to channel financial, technical and other types of resources towards the priorities of the New Partnership, in particular infrastructural development, health services, education, water and agriculture, in accordance with the priorities determined by each African country, and to explore ways of generating new public and private innovative sources of finance for development purposes, provided that those sources do not unduly burden developing countries, particularly in Africa, and in this regard notes the proposal for the use of special drawing rights allocations for development purposes;

22. *Recognizes* the importance of South-South cooperation and the contribution that it can make to the implementation of the New Partnership, encourages in this regard other partners to support this type of cooperation, including, as appropriate, through triangular cooperation, and considers that South-South cooperation should be viewed not as a substitute for, but rather as a complement to, the support provided by developed countries;

23. *Calls upon* the private sector and civil society outside Africa to participate in and contribute to the implementation of the New Partnership in all its aspects, including through effective partnerships between the public and private sectors;

24. *Calls upon* the United Nations system, within respective mandates, to align its activities in Africa with the priorities of the New Partnership, in accordance with the priorities determined by each African country, and urges the scaling up of resources for this purpose;

25. *Also calls upon* the United Nations system to enhance its advocacy role and public information activities in support of Africa's development;

26. *Urges* the United Nations system, in coordinating its activities at the national, regional and global levels, to foster a coherent response, including through close collaboration with bilateral donors in the implementation of the New Partnership in response to the needs of individual countries within the larger framework of the New Partnership;

27. *Welcomes* the actions already under way at the regional level to organize the activities of the United Nations system around thematic clusters covering the priority areas of the New Partnership and, in this regard, urges the strengthening of this process as a means of enhancing the coordinated response of the United Nations system in support of the New Partnership;

28. *Calls upon* the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to further strengthen their existing coordination and programming mechanisms, in particular the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, as a means of enhancing support to African countries in the implementation of the New Partnership and in support of national poverty reduction strategies and in particular, where appropriate, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers;

29. *Urges* the United Nations system to work closely with the African Union and other regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations, to ensure the implementation of the programmes and priorities of the New Partnership;

30. *Encourages* the ongoing efforts of the United Nations system to further enhance the simplification and harmonization of its planning, programming, disbursement and reporting procedures at the national, subregional and regional levels so as to ease the burden on the limited capacities of African countries;

31. *Requests* the United Nations system to assist in the implementation of the New Partnership through the provision of continuing support for the efforts of African countries in human and institutional capacity-building at the national, subregional and regional levels and mobilization of financial resources;

32. *Requests* the multilateral financial institutions to ensure that their support for Africa is compatible with the New Partnership;

33. *Calls upon* the United Nations system to strengthen its cooperation with the African Union and its Peace and Security Council and other African mechanisms in their efforts to resolve and prevent conflicts at the subregional and continental levels in order to ensure a solid basis for the implementation of the New Partnership and, in this regard, welcomes the establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group on

Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa of the Security Council and of an ad hoc advisory group on African countries emerging from conflict within the framework of the Economic and Social Council;

34. *Notes* the decision of the Secretary-General to give to his Special Adviser on Africa the responsibility of coordinating and guiding the preparation of reports of the United Nations Secretariat related to Africa and notes the decision to transfer the resources of the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries to the Adviser;

35. *Underscores* the need for a structure in the United Nations Secretariat in New York, at an appropriate level, which will review and report on support provided by the United Nations system and the international community for the new Partnership and on the coordinated implementation of outcomes of summit meetings and conferences as they relate to Africa as well as to coordinate global advocacy in support of the New Partnership and, in this context, requests the Secretary-General to make proposals on the organization of such a structure within the framework of his proposals for the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005;

36. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council, pursuant to its role in respect of system-wide coordination, to consider how to support the objectives of the present resolution;

37. *Decides* to include a single, comprehensive agenda item on the development of Africa, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support", in the annual agenda of the General Assembly, beginning at the fifty-eighth session and encourages the efforts being made towards clustering the items related to Africa's development;

38. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit the first consolidated report on the implementation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the basis of input from Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and the other stakeholders in the New Partnership, such as the private sector and civil society.

United Nations A/57/469

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 October 2002

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 118
**Human resources management**

# Human resources management reform, monitoring capacity in the Office of Human Resources Management, consultants and individual contractors, and employment of retired former staff

## Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the reports of the Secretary-General on consultants and individual contractors (A/57/310), on employment of retired former staff (A/57/413), on monitoring capacity in the Office of Human Resources Management (A/57/276) and on human resources management reform (A/57/293). During its consideration of the reports, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

### Consultants and individual contractors

2. The report of the Secretary-General on consultants and individual contractors for the year 2001 (A/57/310) is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/221 of 7 April 1999. The Advisory Committee welcomes the report and notes that the information and analysis contained therein would permit the Committee and the General Assembly to monitor this type of personnel services, which normally is not clearly explained in the United Nations proposed programme budgets. The Committee notes that during the reporting period, the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) was still being installed in certain offices away from Headquarters and it was not possible to present IMIS-based information on a worldwide basis. The report therefore was issued with some delay and includes data from legacy systems for the earlier part of 2001 and from IMIS for the latter part of the reporting period (A/57/310, para. 2). **The Committee trusts that for 2002, with the installation of IMIS in offices away from Headquarters, the problem will not recur and the report will be issued at a much earlier date. The Committee intends to use the content of the report for 2002 during its examination of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005. In this connection,**

02-63841 (E) 181002

**the Committee expects that programme managers will be informed and able to justify their own requirements for consultants and individual contractors.**

3. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraphs 5 to 7 and table 1 of the report that the number of consultants and individual contractors increased in 2001, as compared with recalibrated data for 2000. The Committee was provided with data for 2000 on contracts with consultants and individual contractors, as compared with 2001, as follows (see also annexes I and II to the present report):

| | *2000* | *2001* |
|---|---|---|
| Contracts with consultants (number of persons) | 3 054 | 3 300 |
| Contracts with individual contractors (number of persons) | 1 314 | 1 497 |
| **Total consultants and individual contractors** | **4 368** | **4 797** |
| Contracts with consultants (number of contracts) | 4 173 | 4 204 |
| Contracts with individual contractors (number of contracts) | 2 471 | 2 939 |
| **Total number of contracts** | **6 644** | **7 143** |
| Contracts with consultants (fees in $ million) | $33.1 | $36.6 |
| Contracts with individual contractors (fees in $ million) | 8.8 | 10.3 |
| **Total fees ($ million)** | **$41.9** | **$46.9** |

4. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 9 and table 3 of the report that 48.5 per cent of the total number of contracts issued in 2001 were for administrative services (20.2 per cent for consultants and 28.3 per cent for individual contractors), while a very limited number of contracts were issued in 2001 for substantive programme activities in the budget (0.8 per cent for programme planning, 1.2 per cent for programme evaluation, 5.2 per cent for analytical studies and 9.2 per cent for programme implementation). **In the view of the Committee, the number of contracts issued for administrative services is excessive as compared with those issued for substantive programme areas. There is a need to review this matter carefully.**

5. Table 2 of the annex to the report provides a breakdown of consultants and individual contractors by nationality in 2001. Although consultants were engaged from 156 countries, 19 countries accounted for 51.8 per cent of all consultants; individual contractors came from 116 countries, although 11 countries accounted for 66.5 per cent of all individual contractors. The Advisory Committee notes that more than 50 per cent of the persons engaged in 2001 were from developed countries. **The Committee requests that the matter be reviewed with a view to engaging more consultants and individual contractors from developing countries and from countries with economies in transition.**

6. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 10 and table 4 of the report that the largest occupational group for individual contractors in 2001 is translators and revisers (256 persons). It further notes that a large number of contracts for consultants and individual contractors issued in 2001 under the occupational group "support related to professional, managerial and technical occupation" were for many clerical and administrative support services, including secretarial support (109 persons), typing (47 persons), text processing (7 persons), messenger services (26 persons) and filing (1 person). **The foregoing statistics point to a potential**

**problem in the use of special service agreements. The Committee intends to follow up on this in the context of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.**

**Employment of retired former staff**

7. The report of the Secretary-General is submitted pursuant to General Assembly decision 51/408 of 4 November 1996, requesting the Secretary-General to report every two years on all aspects of the use of retired former staff. The report includes information for the biennium 2000-2001 on the possible revision of the ceiling on annual earnings of retirees and provides information concerning retired former staff recruited on a short-term basis. As requested by the Committee (A/53/691, para. 10), the report also includes statistics on persons who have retired after age 60 or 62 but have been re-employed for a period for six months or more.

8. In its decision 51/408, the General Assembly decided to set a ceiling across the board of $22,000 per calendar year, representing an amount updated from the $12,000 limit set by the Assembly in 1982, for the employment of retired staff in receipt of a pension benefit from the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, with the exception of language-services staff, for whom the ceiling will be $40,000 per calendar year, and to limit such employment to no more than six months per calendar year.

9. As indicated in paragraph 9 of the Secretary-General's report, when the General Assembly adopted its decision 51/408, the daily rate for freelance interpreters in New York was $355, which made possible the employment of freelance interpreters for up to 112 days (or six months). Because of cost-of-living adjustments, the current daily rate for interpreters is now $391.50, which makes possible the employment of freelance interpreters for only up to 102 days before reaching the ceiling of $40,000 per calendar year. For the reasons explained in paragraphs 8 to 10 of the report, it is proposed that to meet the requirements of language staff of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services (currently the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management), retired freelance language staff be allowed to work for up to 125 workdays per calendar year, which would be equivalent, at the current daily rate of $391.50, to the amount of $48,937.50 per calendar year. The Advisory Committee was informed that the number of workdays proposed represents one half of the 250 workdays available in the calendar year.

10. **The Advisory Committee concurs in the proposal of the Secretary-General to set the maximum limit on the employment of retired language staff in terms of workdays rather than as a dollar amount. The Advisory Committee therefore recommends that the maximum limit be set at 125 workdays per year. In so doing, it will not be necessary in the future to consider frequent revisions to the limit in order to accommodate cost-of-living adjustments to the daily rate.**

11. The Advisory Committee welcomes the statistics and analysis provided in part III of the report for the biennium 2002-2001. **The Committee recommends that, in future, a trend analysis be included in the report, with corresponding statistical data shown in the tables of the annex to the report for the last biennium. Moreover, the pay or grade of the retirees should be explained more clearly in the tables.**

12. The Advisory Committee notes that, within the breakdown of the use of retired former staff by department or office, language services in the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services accounted for 26.2 per cent of the engagement, making the Department the single largest user of retired staff (A/57/413, para. 12). The Committee understands that retired former language staff have been recruited from a limited number of countries. **The Committee requests that, in future, the breakdown by nationality and gender (see A/57/413, para. 13, and annex, table 4) also show the language staff component separately. The Committee believes that a greater effort should be made to recruit retired former language staff from a wider geographical area and, wherever feasible, to use them in a remote role, rather than run the additional expense of bringing them to a United Nations centre, bearing in mind the need for adequate resources for in-house revision.**

13. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 18 of the report that the use of retired former staff in language services decreased in the biennium 2000-2001 in the number of engagements, number of days worked and fees and salaries, as compared with the biennium 1998-1999, while in administrative services, the use of retired former staff increased in 2000-2001 in the number of engagements, number of days worked and total cost, as compared with the biennium 1998-1999. **The Committee requests that in future the reasons for these changes be explained.**

14. The Advisory Committee recalls that whenever a vacancy occurs, there is no dearth of new applicants. For example, in table A.27C.10 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, for the biennium 2000-2001, 50,000 applications were projected for 720 vacancies at the Professional level and higher and for the biennium 2002-2003, 70,000 applications were projected for 700 vacancies. **The Committee reiterates its view that programme managers should not use their inability to plan for vacancies and process applications in a timely manner as an excuse to engage retired personnel (see A/56/7, para. 135).**

**Monitoring capacity in the Office of Human Resources Management**

15. The report of the Secretary-General is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/258 of 14 June 2001. The report outlines a plan to build increased capacity in the Office of Human Resources Management to improve its effectiveness in monitoring all relevant activities in the Secretariat regardless of the source of funding. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 20 of the report that it is the intention of the Secretary-General to continue current monitoring activities within the constraints of available resources and to adjust resources to new functions so as to develop organizational capacity to fully meet the goal of achieving the comprehensive approach for monitoring described in the report. **The Committee intends to revert to this matter in the context of its review of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.**

**Human resources management reform**

16. The report of the Secretary-General is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 55/258 on human resources management and its decision 56/462 on young professionals. The report outlines the progress achieved and planned future activities in each of the major initiatives for reform submitted by the Secretary-

General in his report of 1 August 2000 on human resources management reform (A/55/253).

17. The Advisory Committee notes that the information on achievements reported to date on the major initiatives of the human resources management reform (A/57/293, section III) and other specific issues which are cross-cutting in nature (A/57/293, section IV) cover the experience of the Secretariat for a rather short period. **In the Committee's opinion, the Secretary-General should report in a comprehensive manner on the achievements of the human resources management reform when sufficient information is available on the experiences of the Secretariat with the implementation of the reform initiatives as implemented within the prerogative of the Secretary-General or as approved by the General Assembly. The report, which should cover relevant activities of the Secretariat regardless of the source of funding, should be submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.**

18. The Advisory Committee was informed of the intention of the Secretariat to streamline further the reports of the Secretary-General on human resources management, including via publication of more data on the Intranet. **The Committee trusts that such streamlining will take into account the Committee's previously stressed concern for the need to report in an analytical manner, providing sufficient statistical data in support of the analyses and conclusions in the reports.**

# Annex I

## Summary data (baseline) on contracts with consultants and individual contractors, 2001 and 2000

| | NUMBER OF PERSONS | | % OF TOTAL/ SUBTOTAL | | NUMBER OF CONTRACTS | | % OF TOTAL/ SUBTOTAL | | DAYS WORKED | | FEES ($000) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 |
| **Contracts with Consultants SUBTOTAL** | **3 300** | **3 054** | **68.8** | **69.9** | **4 204** | **4 173** | **58.9** | **62.8** | **321 786** | **263 623** | **36 630** | **33 086** |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Women** | 886 | 828 | 26.8 | 27.1 | 1 156 | 1 144 | 27.5 | 27.4 | 86 246 | 75 909 | 8 329 | 9 024 |
| **Former Staff** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Retirees | 47 | 51 | 1.4 | 2.7 | 62 | 79 | 1.5 | 1.9 | | | | |
| Non-retired former staff age 60 or over | 37 | 190 | 1.1 | 10.5 | 49 | 241 | 1.2 | 5.8 | | | | |
| Non-retired former staff under age 60 | 149 | 16 | 4.5 | 2.3 | 216 | 18 | 5.1 | 2.5 | | | | |
| **Contracts with Individual Contractors SUBTOTAL** | **1 497** | **1 314** | **31.2** | **30.1** | **2 939** | **2 471** | **41.1** | **37.2** | **181 305** | **130 270** | **10 326** | **8 857** |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Women** | 758 | 662 | 50.6 | 50.4 | 1 502 | 1 320 | 51.1 | 53.4 | 91 382 | 63 322 | 5 142 | 4 104 |
| **Former Staff** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Retirees | 22 | 33 | 1.5 | 2.5 | 38 | 54 | 1.3 | 2.2 | | | | |
| Non-retired former staff age 60 or over | 27 | 75 | 1.8 | 5.7 | 38 | 115 | 1.3 | 4.7 | | | | |
| Non-retired former staff under age 60 | 82 | 8 | 5.5 | 0.6 | 183 | 11 | 6.2 | 0.4 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Consultants and Individual Contractors TOTAL** | **4 797** | **4 368** | **100** | **100** | **7 143** | **6 644** | **100** | **100** | **503 091** | **393 893** | **46 956** | **41 943** |
| **Level of Education** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Doctorate or equivalent | 1 399 | 703 | 29.2 | 16.1 | | | | | | | | |
| Master's degree or equivalent | 1 691 | 2 136 | 35.3 | 48.9 | | | | | | | | |
| Bachelor's degree or equivalent | 964 | 956 | 20.1 | 21.9 | | | | | | | | |
| Less than Bachelor's degree | 303 | 290 | 6.3 | 6.6 | | | | | | | | |
| Not Available | 440 | 283 | 9.2 | 6.5 | | | | | | | | |
| **Evaluation of performance** | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Excellent | | | | | 2 743 | 2 338 | 38.4 | 35.2 | | | | |
| Good | | | | | 3 552 | 3 544 | 49.7 | 53.3 | | | | |
| Adequate | | | | | 148 | 205 | 2.1 | 3.1 | | | | |
| Not Adequate | | | | | 6 | 6 | 0.1 | 0.1 | | | | |
| Not Available | | | | | 694 | 551 | 9.7 | 8.3 | | | | |

# Annex II

## Expenditure on consultants and individual contractors by source of funding, 2000 and 2001

The following abbreviations are listed in the present annex:

| | |
|---|---|
| DDA | Department for Disarmament Affairs |
| DESA | Department of Economic and Social Affairs |
| DGAACS | Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services |
| DM | Department of Management |
| DPA | Department of Political Affairs |
| DPI | Department of Public Information |
| DPKO | Department of Peacekeeping Operations |
| DPKO/FALD | Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Field Administration and Logistics Division |
| ECA | Economic Commission for Africa |
| ECE | Economic Commission for Europe |
| ECLAC | Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean |
| EOSG | Executive Office of the Secretary-General |
| ESCAP | Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific |
| ESCWA | Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia |
| ICSC | International Civil Service Commission |
| ICTY | International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia |
| ICTR | International Tribunal for Rwanda |
| INTERORG | Inter-organizational bodies: Joint Inspection Unit; High-level Committee on Management; International Computing Centre; Information Systems Coordination Committee |
| OCHA | Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| ODCCP | Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention |
| OHCHR | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| OIOS | Office of Internal Oversight Services |
| OLA | Office of Legal Affairs |
| OSG | Office of the Secretary-General |
| OSRSGCAC | Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict |
| UNCC | United Nations Compensation Commission |
| UNCHS | United Nations Centre for Human Settlements |
| UNCTAD | United Nations Conference on Trade and Development |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNFIP | United Nations Fund for International Partnerships |

| | |
|---|---|
| UNITAR | United Nations Institute for Training and Research |
| UNMOVIC | United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission |
| UNOG | United Nations Office at Geneva |
| UNOIP | United Nations Office of the Iraq Programme |
| UNON | United Nations Office at Nairobi |
| UNOSC | Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator |
| UNOV | United Nations Office at Vienna |
| UNSCOM | United Nations Special Commission |

| Department or Office | Consultants | | | | | | Individual Contractors | | | | | | Total | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Assessed Contributions | | Extra-budgetary | | Total | | Assessed Contributions | | Extra-budgetary | | Total | | Assessed Contributions | | Extra-budgetary | | Total | |
| | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 |
| | (Thousands of United States dollars) | | | | | | (Thousands of United States dollars) | | | | | | (Thousands of United States dollars) | | | | | |
| DDA | 28 | 64 | 112 | 40 | 140 | 104 | 16 | 0 | 11 | 3 | 27 | 3 | 44 | 64 | 122 | 43 | 166 | 107 |
| DESA | 1 629 | 1 003 | 5 085 | 5 607 | 6 714 | 6 610 | 49 | 65 | 16 | 26 | 65 | 91 | 1 678 | 1 067 | 5 101 | 5 633 | 6 779 | 6 700 |
| DGAACS | 86 | 87 | 0 | 0 | 86 | 87 | 219 | 184 | 0 | 9 | 219 | 193 | 305 | 270 | 0 | 9 | 305 | 280 |
| DM | 1 170 | 1 375 | 87 | 104 | 1 256 | 1 479 | 503 | 621 | 204 | 134 | 707 | 755 | 1 672 | 1 996 | 291 | 238 | 1 963 | 2 234 |
| DPA | 1 734 | 665 | 213 | 235 | 1 947 | 899 | 0 | 86 | 42 | 39 | 42 | 124 | 1 734 | 750 | 255 | 273 | 1 989 | 1 024 |
| DPI | 92 | 143 | 74 | 20 | 165 | 162 | 878 | 987 | 378 | 308 | 1 255 | 1 295 | 969 | 1 130 | 451 | 327 | 1 420 | 1 457 |
| DPKO | 62 | 150 | 478 | 287 | 540 | 436 | 0 | 0 | 75 | 48 | 75 | 48 | 62 | 150 | 553 | 335 | 615 | 485 |
| DPKO/FALD | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 0 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 0 | 22 |
| ECA | 1 229 | 1 123 | 1 327 | 1 247 | 2 556 | 2 369 | 835 | 619 | 244 | 651 | 1 080 | 1 270 | 2 064 | 1 742 | 1 571 | 1 898 | 3 635 | 3 639 |
| ECE | 199 | 64 | 337 | 242 | 535 | 305 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 200 | 64 | 342 | 244 | 542 | 308 |
| ECLAC | 549 | 167 | 2 408 | 1 100 | 2 957 | 1 267 | 660 | 244 | 1 442 | 266 | 2 101 | 510 | 1 208 | 411 | 3 850 | 1 366 | 5 058 | 1 777 |
| EOSG | 0 | 53 | 0 | 208 | 0 | 261 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 53 | 0 | 223 | 0 | 276 |
| ESCAP | 453 | 203 | 1 083 | 1 368 | 1 536 | 1 571 | 91 | 84 | 134 | 92 | 255 | 176 | 544 | 287 | 1 217 | 1 460 | 1 761 | 1 747 |
| ESCWA | 324 | 191 | 67 | 173 | 390 | 365 | 480 | 133 | 103 | 50 | 582 | 183 | 803 | 324 | 169 | 223 | 972 | 547 |
| ICSC | 0 | 0 | 98 | 93 | 98 | 93 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 98 | 105 | 98 | 105 |
| ICTY | 0 | 1 949 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 1 967 | 0 | 758 | 0 | 44 | 0 | 802 | 0 | 2 707 | 0 | 62 | 0 | 2 769 |
| INTERORG | 0 | 0 | 24 | 0 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 0 | 24 | 0 |
| ICTR | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 124 | 0 | 35 | 0 | 158 | 0 | 137 | 0 | 35 | 0 | 172 |
| OCHA | 30 | 152 | 1 104 | 757 | 1 134 | 909 | 7 | 33 | 53 | 54 | 60 | 87 | 37 | 185 | 1 157 | 812 | 1 194 | 997 |
| ODCCP | 76 | 6 | 23 | 173 | 99 | 179 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 76 | 6 | 23 | 179 | 99 | 185 |
| OHCHR | 155 | 131 | 586 | 564 | 741 | 695 | 155 | 9 | 92 | 5 | 247 | 13 | 310 | 140 | 678 | 568 | 988 | 708 |
| OIOS | 105 | 30 | 2 | 2 | 107 | 32 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 110 | 32 | 2 | 5 | 112 | 38 |
| OLA | 109 | 40 | 10 | 0 | 118 | 40 | 56 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 56 | 34 | 164 | 74 | 10 | 0 | 174 | 74 |
| OSG | 52 | 0 | 145 | 0 | 197 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 40 | 0 | 54 | 0 | 66 | 0 | 185 | 0 | 251 | 0 |
| OSRSG/CAC | 0 | 0 | 136 | 0 | 136 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 159 | 0 | 159 | 0 |
| UNCC | 0 | 0 | 4 715 | 179 | 4 715 | 179 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 4 715 | 179 | 4 715 | 190 |
| UNCHS | 30 | 0 | 792 | 0 | 822 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 61 | 0 | 74 | 0 | 43 | 0 | 853 | 0 | 896 | 0 |
| UNCTAD | 392 | 953 | 3 354 | 5 722 | 3 746 | 6 675 | 35 | 188 | 525 | 842 | 560 | 1 030 | 427 | 1 141 | 3 879 | 6 564 | 4 307 | 7 705 |
| UNEP | 23 | 13 | 2 437 | 1 202 | 2 460 | 1 215 | 0 | 7 | 375 | 168 | 375 | 175 | 23 | 20 | 2 812 | 1 370 | 2 835 | 1 390 |
| UNFIP | 0 | 0 | 39 | 0 | 39 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 0 | 24 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 62 | 0 | 62 | 0 |
| UNITAR | 0 | 0 | 318 | 260 | 318 | 260 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 1 | 28 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 347 | 261 | 347 | 261 |

| Department or Office | Consultants | | | | | | Individual Contractors | | | | | | Total | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Assessed Contributions | | Extra-budgetary | | Total | | Assessed Contributions | | Extra-budgetary | | Total | | Assessed Contributions | | Extra-budgetary | | Total | |
| | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 | 2001 | 2000 |
| | (Thousands of United States dollars) | | | | | | (Thousands of United States dollars) | | | | | | (Thousands of United States dollars) | | | | | |
| UNMOVIC | 0 | 0 | 35 | 0 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 34 | 0 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 68 | 0 | 68 | 0 |
| UNOG | 297 | 103 | 386 | 607 | 684 | 710 | 883 | 516 | 415 | 282 | 1 298 | 798 | 1 180 | 619 | 801 | 890 | 1 981 | 1 509 |
| UNOIP | 0 | 0 | 1 967 | 1 558 | 1 967 | 1 558 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 36 | 30 | 36 | 0 | 0 | 1 997 | 1 594 | 1 997 | 1 594 |
| UNON | 0 | 178 | 122 | 2 237 | 122 | 2 415 | 80 | 41 | 804 | 774 | 884 | 815 | 80 | 219 | 927 | 3 011 | 1 007 | 3 230 |
| UNOSC | 0 | 0 | 61 | 0 | 61 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 61 | 0 | 61 | 0 |
| UNOV | 41 | 15 | 146 | 109 | 187 | 124 | 63 | 43 | 130 | 103 | 193 | 146 | 104 | 58 | 276 | 212 | 380 | 270 |
| UNSCOM | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 0 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 37 | 0 | 37 |
| N/A | 0 | 5 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 41 | 0 | 28 | 0 | 28 | 0 | 56 |
| **Total** | **8 865** | **8 872** | **27 771** | **24 161** | **36 632** | **33 034** | **5 043** | **4 811** | **5 289** | **44 047** | **10 330** | **8 858** | **13 903** | **13 683** | **33 056** | **28 208** | **46 959** | **41 892** |

*Note*: Fees only. Data on expenditures are derived from IMIS departments and offices at United Nations Headquarters in New York and from individual updates submitted by offices away from Headquarters to the Paradox database of the Office of Human Resources Management.

United Nations A/57/470

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 October 2002
English
Original: Arabic/English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 36
**The situation in the Middle East**

# The situation in the Middle East

## Report of the Secretary-General*

*Summary*

The present report contains replies from Member States to the Secretary-General's note verbale of 27 June 2002 concerning implementation of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 56/31, entitled "Jerusalem", and 56/32, entitled "The Syrian Golan", of 3 December 2001.

## Contents

| | | Paragraphs | Page |
|---|---|---|---|
| I. | Introduction | 1–2 | 2 |
| II. | Replies received from Member States | | 2 |
| | Gambia | | 2 |
| | Israel | | 2 |
| | Japan | | 3 |
| | Syrian Arab Republic | | 4 |
| | United Arab Emirates | | 5 |

* The present report is being submitted on 14 October 2002 so as to include as much updated information as possible.

02-63893 (E) 011102

# I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 56/31 and 56/32 of 3 December 2001. In its resolution 56/31, which deals with the transfer by some States of their diplomatic missions to Jerusalem in violation of Security Council resolution 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980, the Assembly called once more upon those States to abide by the provisions of the relevant United Nations resolutions. In resolution 56/32, which deals with Israeli policies in the Syrian territory occupied by Israel since 1967, the Assembly demanded once more that Israel withdraw from all the occupied Syrian Golan in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

2. The Secretary-General, in order to fulfil his reporting responsibility under the above-mentioned resolutions, on 27 June 2002 addressed notes verbales to the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations and to the Permanent Representatives of other Member States requesting them to inform him of any steps their Governments had taken or envisaged taking concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of the above resolutions. As at 11 October 2002, replies had been received from Gambia, Israel, Japan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates. Those replies are reproduced in section II of the present report.

# II. Replies received from Member States

## Gambia

[Original: English]

1. With reference to General Assembly resolution 56/31, the Gambia has no diplomatic mission in Jerusalem and does not intend to transfer any of its missions in that region to Jerusalem.

2. With reference to resolution 56/32, the Gambia fully supports the implementation of all relevant United Nations resolutions affecting the Syrian Golan. The Gambia fully supports the current Middle East peace process and would join Member States in addressing the situation in the Syrian Golan as part of the wider Middle East peace process.

## Israel

[Original: English]

1. As the Secretary-General is aware, Israel voted against these resolutions, as well as against similar resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in previous sessions. In the light of the urgent need to bring an end to all acts of violence and terrorism in the region and to return to the agreed negotiating process, Israel wishes to put on record, once again, its position on this matter.

2. Israel views the aforementioned General Assembly resolutions as unbalanced documents that threaten to prejudge the outcome of the Middle East peace process. The one-sided approach reflected in these resolutions undermines a fundamental

principle of the peace process, according to which the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the region is possible only through direct bilateral negotiations.

## Japan

[Original: English]

1. The steps taken by the Government of Japan concerning the implementation of the relevant provisions of resolutions 56/31 and 56/32 adopted by the General Assembly on 3 December 2001 under the agenda item entitled "The situation in the Middle East" are described below.

### (a) Resolution 56/31

2. It is the view of the Government of Japan that the Basic Law of Israel of 1980 gives ex post facto legal approval to the annexation of East Jerusalem, which Israel occupied in 1967, and that such a unilateral change to the legal status of an occupied territory is in violation of the relevant United Nations resolutions and cannot be recognized.

3. The Government of Japan considers that, as agreed in the Oslo Accords, the status of Jerusalem should be determined through the permanent status negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians, and that until a solution is achieved through such negotiations both parties should refrain from taking any unilateral actions relating to the situation in Jerusalem. The Government of Japan does not have an establishment in Jerusalem; its Embassy is in Tel Aviv.

4. The vicious cycle of violence has been continuing on the ground for nearly two years, and little progress has been seen in the dialogue towards peace between the parties. The Government of Japan has called for self-restraint and dialogue on the part of both parties. It also has extended economic assistance to the Palestinians for their nation-building efforts, in particular in the field of human resources development in support of the Palestinian Authority reforms, which are indispensable to realizing a vision of two States living side by side within secure and recognized borders as well as achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The Government of Japan will actively continue these efforts.

### (b) Resolution 56/32

5. In response to the passage by the Knesset in 1981 of legislation concerning the annexation of the Golan Heights, the Government of Japan issued the following statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on 15 December 1981. The fundamental position conveyed therein has not changed.

> "(a) The Knesset adopted the legislation which in effect annexes the Golan Heights on 14 December 1981. Japan cannot condone such a unilateral change to the legal status of an occupied territory by Israel, following the annexation of East Jerusalem in July 1980, which is in total violation of international law and United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).
>
> "(b) The Government of Japan is deeply concerned that such an action would not only impair the atmosphere that exists for the settlement of the

Arab-Israeli conflicts through peaceful means, but would also heighten tension in the region.

"(c) On this occasion, the Government of Japan reiterates its strong demand that Israel withdraw from all the territories occupied in 1967 as early as possible."

6. Since February 1996, the Government of Japan has been dispatching a 45-member contingent to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) operating in the Golan Heights.

## Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]

1. The Syrian Arab Republic supported General Assembly resolution 56/32, entitled "The Syrian Golan", and once again stresses the absolute necessity of Israel's ending its occupation of the Syrian Golan and complying with Security Council resolution 497 (1981) of 17 December 1981. In the resolution, the Assembly regarded Israel's decision to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights as being null and void and without legal effect. It demanded that Israel rescind its decision forthwith and abide by the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly on the Syrian Golan, including resolution 56/63 of 10 December 2001, particularly paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5 thereof, in which the Assembly called upon Israel to desist from changing the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan; called upon Israel to desist from the establishment of settlements and determined that all legislative and administrative measures and actions taken or to be taken by Israel, the occupying Power, that purported to alter the character and legal status of the occupied Syrian Golan were null and void and constituted a flagrant violation of international law and of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, and had no legal effect; and called upon Israel to desist from imposing Israeli citizenship and Israeli identity cards on the Syrian citizens in the occupied Syrian Golan and from taking repressive measures against the Syrian population of the Golan.

2. The Syrian Arab Republic also affirms its support for resolution 56/31, entitled "Jerusalem", and invites the international community to exert pressure on Israel to end its occupation of the Arab territories that it occupied in 1967, including Jerusalem, and to abide by Security Council resolution 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980, in which the Council decided not to recognize the "Basic Law" on Jerusalem enacted by Israel, and determined that the decision of Israel to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the Holy City of Jerusalem was illegal and therefore null and void and had no validity whatsoever. The Syrian Arab Republic also calls upon all States to abide fully by the provisions of resolution 56/31, in particular the provision in the second preambular paragraph which refers to Security Council resolution 478 (1980) of 20 August 1980, in which the Council called upon those States that had established diplomatic missions in Jerusalem to withdraw such missions from the Holy City and to abide by the provisions of the resolution.

## United Arab Emirates

[Original: English]

### 1. The occupied city of Jerusalem

1. The United Arab Emirates has reiterated in all international circles the Arabic identity of Jerusalem and stressed the importance of resisting the Israeli attempts to profane its Islamic and Christian monuments and turn it into a Jewish city. We have always called upon international society to bring pressure to bear upon Israel to put an end to all such practices. The United Arab Emirates condemns the prosecution of Muslim and Christian religious figures by the Israeli occupying forces and insists on the importance of ensuring freedom of religion in the occupied city of Jerusalem.

2. We also affirm the joint Arabic position which considers the transfer of the American Embassy, or any attempt by any country to transfer its embassy to Jerusalem before reaching a final solution on the status of the city, as illegal and a violation of all international laws. We also confirm our commitment to the resolutions of the Arab Summit, which call for boycotting any country that recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel or transfers its embassy to the city.

3. The United Arab Emirates has funded projects in Jerusalem in the total amount of US$ 6 million, involving providing flooring for the inside of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and furnishing it, as well as opening a 24-hour clinic. We also repaired a number of wells, cemeteries and damaged houses. We funded the construction of a wall around Al-Quds University and provided hospitals in the city of Jerusalem as well as other Palestinian cities with ambulances and medicine. There are further projects to be carried out in the city in the future.

### 2. The Syrian Arab Golan

4. The United Arab Emirates has, in all international forums, confirmed its support to the Syrian position and its attempts to regain sovereignty over the occupied Arab Golan, and has assured Syria of its solidarity in regaining its rights and freeing its occupied land. The United Arab Emirates has also stressed the importance of exerting all necessary efforts to revive the peace process on all tracks and establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East region, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), which call for the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab lands, including the occupied Syrian Arab Golan.

United Nations A/57/471

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 October 2002

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 112
**Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003**

# Additional expenditures deriving from inflation and currency fluctuations

## Report of the Secretary-General*

*Summary*

The present report has been prepared pursuant to paragraph 44 of General Assembly resolution 56/253, which requested the Secretary-General to submit an updated study on a comprehensive solution to the problem of additional expenditures deriving from inflation and currency fluctuations, taking into account General Assembly resolution 41/213. The report provides an update to earlier reviews, the conclusions of which have proven to be still currently relevant to dealing with this issue. Information previously recommended by the ACABQ for inclusion in subsequent reports on this subject has been taken into account in this report.

* The document was submitted late to the conference services without the explanation required under paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 53/208 B, by which the Assembly decided that, if a report is submitted late, the reason should be included in a footnote to the document.

02-64546 (E) 281002

# I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly in paragraph 44 of its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session an updated study on a comprehensive solution to the problem of additional expenditures deriving from inflation and currency fluctuations, taking into account its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986.

2. Paragraphs 10 and 11 of annex I to Assembly resolution 41/213, concerning the contingency fund and additional expenditures, read as follows:

> "10. A comprehensive solution to the problem of all additional expenditures, including those deriving from inflation and currency fluctuation, is also necessary. It is desirable to accommodate these expenditures within the overall level of the budget, either as a reserve or as a separate part of the contingency fund set up in paragraph 8 [of annex I to the resolution]. The Secretary-General should examine all aspects related to the question and report, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Committee for Programme and Coordination, to the General Assembly at its forty-second session.
>
> "11. Pending a decision by the General Assembly on the question dealt with in paragraph 10 above, the revised estimates arising from the impact of extraordinary expenses, including those relating to the maintenance of peace and security, as well as fluctuations in rates of exchange and inflation, shall not be covered by the contingency fund and shall continue to be treated in accordance with established procedures and under the relevant provisions of the Financial Regulations and Rules. The Secretary-General should nevertheless make efforts to absorb these expenditures, to the extent possible, through savings from the programme budget, without causing in any way a negative effect on programme delivery and without prejudice to the utilization of the contingency fund."

# II. Updated review of the problem

3. The most recent comprehensive report on additional expenditures deriving from inflation and currency fluctuations was presented to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session (A/C.5/51/57). It was noted that this issue had been on the agenda of the General Assembly more than once, and had been the subject of extensive reviews and studies over the years. It was acknowledged that the problem was complex, and that no easy solutions existed. The present report recalls much of the earlier reviews, and provides an updated study taking into account the fluctuations in exchange rates and inflation experienced in recent years. In addition, information previously recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for inclusion in subsequent reports on this subject has also been taken into account.

4. Notable reviews of this issue date as far back as the early 1970s, when the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the Working Group on Currency Instability reported on the subject. The Working Group, composed of 13 Member States designated by the President of the General Assembly, was to consider alternative solutions to

difficulties resulting from the effect of continuing currency instability and inflation on the budgets of the United Nations system. The General Assembly reviewed the alternatives outlined in the report of the Working Group (A/9773) and noted that it had found no generally agreed alternatives to the policies already utilized. More recent reports covering this issue include the reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-second session (A/42/225 and Add.1), forty-fourth session (A/44/665) and the above-mentioned (A/C.5/51/57). Related reports were made by the Advisory Committee to the General Assembly at its forty-second session,[1] forty-third session (A/43/929), forty-fourth session (A/44/729) and fifty-second session.[2]

5. In the report submitted to the Assembly at its fifty-first session (A/42/225 and Add.1), the Secretary-General highlighted a number of relevant points. First, the magnitude of adjustments due to changes in rates of inflation and exchange and standard cost adjustments is such as to make it virtually impossible to foresee from the outset the level of expenditures in a biennium. Further, the magnitude of such changes can be such as to make any savings effected in the course of the implementation of the budget totally inadequate. Even if it were agreed that additional requirements arising from changes in rates of inflation and exchange and standard cost adjustments should be met through the reduction of programme activities, the level of savings that might be required and the inability of the Organization to effect such savings at short notice would force the adoption, on a continuing basis, of economy measures such as those in place at times of severe financial crisis. In the report, the Secretary-General noted that, while the continuation of the current methods of dealing with such adjustments appeared to be the least inconvenient approach, a reserve could be utilized to handle such adjustments and, on the basis of experience of the past few bienniums (1980-1981, 1982-1983 and 1984-1985), a provision of $125 million would not appear unreasonable.

6. In its related report,[1] the Advisory Committee expressed the view that the question merited further study and indicated its intention to look at the matter closely with a view to formulating specific recommendations to the Assembly at its forty-third session. In its report to the Assembly at that session (A/43/929), the Committee reviewed the practices of specialized agencies in this respect and outlined the variety of methods that were in use. The Committee concluded that there was an unavoidable cost to mitigating the effects of inflation and currency fluctuation and, faced with the situation, the Assembly might wish to consider the continuation of the current system, whereby the estimate of requirements is adjusted annually on the basis of the most recent forecast by the Secretary-General of inflation and exchange rates.

7. On the other hand, the Committee pointed out that, if the Assembly decided to proceed with seeking a comprehensive solution to the problem, a mechanism to achieve a greater degree of certainty than then existed could be explored. Such a mechanism could be the establishment of a reserve that would cover additional requirements due to currency fluctuation, non-staff cost inflation and statutory cost increases for staff. The Assembly, in its resolution 43/214 of 21 December 1988, agreed to the concept of a reserve that would cover additional requirements due to currency fluctuation, inflation in non-staff costs and statutory cost increases for staff; requested the Secretary-General to formulate a set of procedures for the operation of the reserve fund to be submitted through the Advisory Committee to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session; and agreed to address further at that time the question of setting up such a reserve for the biennium 1990-1991.

8. In response to that request, the Secretary-General prepared the report on the establishment and operation of a reserve fund (A/44/665), in which he stated that the purpose of the reserve fund would seem to be to minimize, during any given biennium, and to the extent possible, changes in the level of the programme budget resulting from variations in the forecast included in the programme budget in respect of currency fluctuation, inflation in non-staff costs and statutory cost increases for staff or, as stated by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/43/929), to achieve a greater degree of certainty than then existed. The report identified two possible ways to establish and fund a reserve: either as a separate fund outside the programme budget or as a section within the programme budget. In either case, the reserve would be funded through assessed contributions. The annex to the present document outlines the detailed procedures for the operation of such a reserve, as initially set out in A/44/665.

9. The Advisory Committee, in its related report (A/44/729), expressed a number of difficulties with the concept put forward by the Secretary-General, pointing out, for example, that the idea of financing the reserve fund from the outset through assessment would not allow Member States a more precise idea of the final total amount to be paid than was currently the case and, in addition, would result in advance payment for requirements that might or might not materialize.

10. The Committee recommended that consideration of a reserve fund should be deferred until the forty-sixth session of the Assembly, at which time it should be taken up again on the basis of a further report by the Secretary-General. The Assembly, in its resolution 44/200 B of 21 December 1989, decided to keep under review the question of a comprehensive solution to the problem of all additional expenditures, including those deriving from inflation and currency fluctuation, and to consider it again at its forty-sixth session. The Assembly did not, however, revert to the question at its forty-sixth session.

11. In its resolution 51/220 of 18 December 1996, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive policy paper which would examine all issues related to the question of all additional expenditures referred to in paragraphs 10 and 11 of annex I to Assembly resolution 41/213. In the report prepared in response to that request (A/C.5/51/57), the Secretary-General noted that the adjustments of this nature required during the bienniums 1994-1995 and 1996-1997 confirmed the significance and volatility of such fluctuations. It was noted that the establishment of an outline of the programme budget and a contingency fund under General Assembly resolution 41/213 reflected the desire of Member States to know at the outset of a biennium the level of resources that would be required during that biennium. It was also noted that this goal had been partially achieved, and that the Secretary-General, through the outline, was given a guideline on which to proceed. It was further noted that while the initial level of the budget and the potential addition through the mechanism of the contingency fund were known in advance, subsequent changes due to inflation and currency fluctuation had given rise to automatic adjustment in the budget.

12. In order to ensure greater predictability and to minimize changes in the level of the programme budget resulting from these fluctuations, two possible alternative courses of action were envisaged in the report:

(a) The first would be to absorb the costs of increases resulting from inflation and currency fluctuation. In view of the amounts involved, the absorption

of such costs would lead to a significant erosion in the real volume of resources available in the programme budget. The issue was compounded by the nature of currency fluctuations. Since these could not be foreseen in advance, and since the Organization was unable to effect savings of a significant magnitude at short notice, it would be necessary to initiate at the outset of a biennium savings measures such as those that had been required to comply with resolution 50/214 of 23 December 1995 in the current biennium. This alternative did not appear desirable;

(b) The second possible course would be the establishment of a reserve fund as initially envisaged by the Secretary-General in his report to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session (A/44/665). The reserve could be funded from assessed contributions and replenished through savings due to variations in the forecast included in the programme budget in respect of currency fluctuation, inflation in non-staff costs and statutory cost increases for staff or through further assessed contributions, as necessary.

The annex to the present document outlines the detailed procedures for the operation of such a reserve as set out in A/44/665.

13. It was acknowledged that the disadvantage of such a system would be that Member States could be presented with an unnecessary financial burden, having to pay in advance assessments that might prove to be unnecessary. It was noted that, under the circumstances, the existing mechanism for dealing with inflation and currency fluctuation might still be the most appropriate.

14. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its related report,[2] shared the Secretary-General's view that the absorption of such costs would lead to an erosion in the real volume of resources available, and therefore did not appear to be a desirable alternative. At the same time, it recalled its difficulty with the idea of financing a reserve from the outset through assessment, even before the need for recourse to it had been identified. The Advisory Committee concurred with the Secretary-General's conclusion that under the circumstances, the current mechanism for dealing with inflation and currency fluctuation might still be the most appropriate. In its decision 54/481 of 15 June 2000, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/51/57) and of the related report of the Advisory Committee,[2] and requested the Secretary-General to keep the Assembly informed of issues pertaining to inflation and currency fluctuation in the context of the budget performance reports.

15. In reporting on the subject to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, the Advisory Committee noted that a breakdown of the increases and decreases attributable in recent bienniums to currency fluctuations, inflation in non-staff costs and statutory increases for staff should be considered important and relevant information. It recommended that this information be included in future reports on the subject. This information is summarized in table 1 below in the recommended format, covering the bienniums 1996-1997, 1998-1999, 2000-2001, and 2002-2003.

Table 1
**Adjustments for currency, inflation and standard costs fluctuations**
(Millions of United States dollars)

| Biennium | Currency fluctuation | Non-staff costs inflation | Staff costs inflation | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1996-1997 | (0.28) | 38.82 | 54.34 | 92.88 |
| 1998-1999 | (127.49) | (24.56) | (49.48) | (201.53) |
| 2000-2001 | (143.63) | 40.54 | 74.69 | (28.40) |
| 2002-2003[a] | (11.80) | 39.97 | 112.53 | 140.70 |

[a] As reflected in the initial programme budget.

16. The information outlined above reconfirms the outcome of earlier reviews on the experience of previous periods — required adjustments are unpredictable and can be quite significant. Net adjustments for these factors over recent periods range from an adjustment downwards of $201 million in the biennium 1998-1999 to an adjustment upwards of $140 million in the initial budget for the biennium 2002-2003. The table shows that, apart from highly volatile currency fluctuations, inflation can also be a significant factor in required adjustments. Further, previous studies have shown that apparent trends can be easily reversed from one appropriations stage to the next for a given biennium (i.e. from the proposed budget, to the initial budget, to the first performance report and to the final appropriations).

17. The Advisory Committee also requested[2] that subsequent reports on the subject provide information on the share of the United Nations budget disbursed in the principal currencies. Table 2 below provides the share by currency of disbursal as budgeted over the bienniums 2000-2001 and 2002-2003.

Table 2
**Estimated share of the regular budget by currency of disbursal**

| Currency | 2000-2001 | 2002-2003 |
|---|---|---|
| | (percentage) | |
| United States dollar | 56.87 | 66.22 |
| Swiss franc | 21.75 | 20.13 |
| Euro[a] | 4.57 | 4.04 |
| Thai baht | 2.62 | 2.31 |
| Chilean peso | 2.92 | 1.96 |
| Mexican peso | 0.53 | 0.42 |
| Ethiopian birr | 3.14 | 3.11 |
| Kenyan shilling | 1.48 | 1.48 |
| Lebanese pound | 2.23 | 2.12 |
| Trinidad and Tobago dollar | 0.18 | 0.18 |
| New shekel | 2.97 | 3.07 |
| Indian rupee | 0.73 | 0.97 |
| **Total** | **100.00** | **100.00** |

[a] Euro share for the biennium 2000-2001 reflects the combined share of the Austrian schilling and Netherlands guilder.

18. From the information above, it can be seen that resources are budgeted for disbursal in two main currencies, the United States dollar and Swiss franc, which together make up about 80 per cent of the regular budget. A number of other currencies listed above make up the remaining 20 per cent. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions reviewed a variety of methods used by the agencies to deal with the effects of fluctuations in the rates of exchange and inflation (see A/43/929). One such method, split assessments, involves the collection of contributions in more than one currency. The Advisory Committee pointed out that requiring part of assessments to be paid in currencies other than the United States dollar, while mitigating losses in times of a falling United States dollar, would work the other way in times of a strengthening dollar. The Advisory Committee noted that there were many practical difficulties associated with mixed currency or split assessments including, in the absence of large reserves, problems associated with cash flow (e.g. not receiving currencies in the right mix for current cash needs).

19. The information outlined above does not give rise to any new solutions to the problem of additional expenditures deriving from inflation and currency fluctuations. Much of the earlier reviews and analysis, available to the General Assembly prior to its most recent decision on the subject (54/481), remain relevant to this issue. In reporting to the General Assembly at its forty-third session (see A/43/929), the Advisory Committee noted that the operations of the United Nations are global, and that no way had yet been found to control inflation or currency movements on a global basis or to predict those factors with absolute certainty. In revisiting the issue of a comprehensive solution to these additional expenditures, it must be noted that this observation still holds true.

20. The absorption of such expenditures, as previously concluded by the Secretary-General and concurred with by the Advisory Committee, is not an alternative that can be practically implemented. Any attempt to absorb such expenditures would severely impact programme implementation. Using the current approved budget as an example, the calculation in table 3 below shows that absorption of an adjustment of $125 million, at the time of the first performance report, would require a reduction of about one third of activities which utilize non-staff costs and are programmed for the second year of the biennium.

Table 3
**Example calculation of adjustment in case of absorption**[a]

| | *United States dollars* |
|---|---|
| Initial budget (for 2002-2003) | 2 625 178 700 |
| less requirements for 2002 | 1 365 000 000 |
| **Balance of approved budget** | **1 260 178 700** |
| less staff costs for 2003[b] | 917 080 900 |
| **Balance of approved budget** | **343 097 800** |
| Adjustment to be absorbed | 125 000 000 |
| Adjustment as a percentage of the balance of the approved budget | 36.43 |

[a] Amounts are based on the initial budget for the biennium 2002-2003 solely as an example and do not reflect required adjustments related to that period.

[b] Staff costs represent the most significant obligation of the Organization which cannot be terminated at short notice. Amount includes staff assessment.

21. The example above outlines the calculations which would relate to the absorption of an amount of $125 million to account for required currency and inflation adjustments at the stage of consideration of a first performance report. The example shows a balance of the approved budget amounting to $1.26 billion after accounting for first-year requirements. Where absorption of an adjustment amount of $125 million is required, the reduction in programmed activities would likely be implemented in a phased manner. While the amount of $1.26 billion would be available for second-year requirements, this amount would largely cover staff-related contractual obligations which cannot be terminated at short notice. After accounting for contractual obligations (such as staff costs), the required absorption of $125 million could only be implemented during the remainder of the biennium through, at least, a one-third reduction in objects of expenditure (and related activities) for which no contractual obligations exist and which can be terminated at relatively short notice. These calculations show that the impact on programmed activities would be considerable, and that the absorption of adjustment amounts for currency and exchange rates cannot be viewed as a practical solution in dealing with this issue.

22. Consequently, the use of a reserve fund remains the only practical alternative of the previously recommended methods. While the establishment of a reserve fund would not provide greater predictability, it would allow a mechanism to budget for potential costs of this nature at the outset of a biennium. Should the General Assembly wish to utilize this method, the procedures outlined in the annex to the present report may be implemented. These procedures, as envisaged in A/44/665, are still appropriate for the operation of such a reserve. At the same time, the overall stability gained through the operation of a reserve would still have one main disadvantage: Member States would have to pay in advance for requirements that might or might not materialize. Rather than incurring such a cost at the outset of each biennium, the continuation of the current system, whereby the estimate of requirements is adjusted annually on the basis of the most recent forecast by the Secretary-General of inflation and exchange rates, could be considered. Inherent to the continuation of the current system would be a commitment on the part of Member States to the implementation of the real level of budgeted activities. While the utilization of the gains received in periods of strengthening of the United States dollar does not normally present a difficulty, there must be a willingness to meet, through additional appropriations, the additional requirements that arise in some periods if damaging programme cuts under the heading of absorption are to be avoided.

## III. Recommendation

23. **The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present report.**

*Notes*

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 7* (A/42/7).

[2] See ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 7* (A/52/7/Rev.1).

## Annex

# Guidelines for the operation of a reserve fund for adjustments resulting from variations in the forecast included in the programme budget in respect of currency fluctuation, inflation in non-staff costs and statutory increases for staff[a]

1. The programme budget shall contain a section that will include provisions for adjustments that may be required as a result of variations in the forecast included in the programme budget in respect of currency fluctuation, inflation in non-staff costs and statutory cost increases for staff. This section shall be entitled the "Reserve Fund".

2. In off-budget years, the General Assembly shall decide on the level of the Reserve Fund, which will be included in the proposed programme budget for the next biennium.

3. The Secretary-General shall, prior to each appropriation stage, submit to the General Assembly for its approval the adjustments required as a result of variations in the forecast included in the programme budget in respect of currency fluctuation, inflation in non-staff costs and statutory cost increases for staff.

4. The adjustments approved by the General Assembly will be reflected in the appropriations. When such adjustments result in additional requirements, these will be reflected under the relevant sections of the programme budget concerned and will be accompanied by a commensurate reduction in the Reserve Fund section of the programme budget. When such adjustments result in reductions, these will be reflected under the relevant sections concerned and will be accompanied by a commensurate increase in the Reserve Fund section up to the level initially approved for the section. Any surplus would be classed as miscellaneous income.

5. If the amount of funds in the Reserve Fund section of the programme budget is insufficient to provide for the additional requirements resulting from variations in the forecast included in the programme budget in respect of currency fluctuation, inflation in non-staff costs and statutory increases for staff, the Secretary-General, in submitting the proposed adjustments to the General Assembly, shall make proposals regarding the manner in which the shortfall should be covered.

6. At the end of the biennium, any residual amount in the Reserve Fund section shall be surrendered in the context of the final appropriations for the biennium.

---

[a] As proposed in the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session (A/44/665, para. 19).

United Nations A/57/472

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 October 2002

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 116
**Pattern of conferences**

# Improving the performance of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services

# Status of recruitment for the Interpretation Section at the United Nations Office at Nairobi

# Simultaneous availability of parliamentary documentation in the six official languages on the United Nations web site

## Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the reports of the Secretary-General on the pattern of conferences (A/57/228), improving the performance of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services (A/57/289) and the status of recruitment for the Interpretation Section at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (A/56/901), as well as the note by the Secretary-General on the simultaneous availability of parliamentary documentation in the six official languages on the United Nations web site (A/C.5/56/37). During its consideration of the reports, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification.

2. The Advisory Committee takes note of the information provided in the report of the Secretary-General on the pattern of conferences concerning utilization of conference-servicing resources and facilities, including consideration of changes in the methodology used for calculating the utilization factor (A/57/228, paras. 4-22). The Committee notes in particular the mention in paragraph 22 of "contingencies" or "ad hoc adjustments" that could be resorted to in order to avoid early endings of meetings. The Committee points out that suggestions such as the inclusion of additional agenda items for a particular meeting in case the list of speakers is exhausted sooner than anticipated or rescheduling or combining meetings for which not enough speakers are inscribed would not be possible for bodies that do not operate using a formal agenda or a list of speakers. **In the opinion of the Committee, the statistics for utilization, the conclusions arrived at using those statistics and the action taken in response should take into account the specific situations that govern the work of some of the bodies in the underutilization category.**

3. The Advisory Committee notes that the report of the Secretary-General on improving the performance of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and

02-64039 (E) 171002

Conference Services (A/57/289) makes no mention of two earlier evaluations of the operations of the Department, namely, the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the inspection of the consolidation of technical support services in the Department (A/55/803) and the comprehensive study of the Secretary-General on conference services (A/C.5/49/34 and Corr.1). **Many of the conclusions reached in those evaluations remain valid and should be taken into account when considering the most recent report.**

4. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with a revised version of the organization chart contained in the report, which includes the posts associated with the various restructured units of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (see annex I below).

5. The Advisory Committee notes the plan to integrate within the Department the technical servicing secretariats of the Fifth and Sixth Committees of the General Assembly (see A/57/289, paras. 10-11). The Committee was informed that the budgetary implications of the change would be reported in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

6. The Advisory Committee notes the statement that requests for sessions beyond authorized duration, or intersessional "informal consultations" that take the form of additional unapproved sessions under another name, will be channelled for consideration through the Committee on Conferences (ibid., para. 15). **The Committee cautions against imposing too strict a rule in such cases. A pragmatic approach should be followed in order not to introduce unnecessary restrictions on the ability of an intergovernmental body or conference to reach a successful conclusion. In this connection, the Committee recalls its comments in paragraph I.50 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003.**[1]

7. The Advisory Committee notes the section of the report entitled "integrating global management" (ibid., paras. 31-40), in particular paragraph 39 thereof, in which the role of the Department and the Under-Secretary-General in the areas of budgeting and personnel at all the duty stations is discussed. **While the Committee commends the aim of ensuring that the institutional relationship between the Department and the other three duty stations is uniform and effectively supports the goal of integrated global management of the Department (ibid., para. 33), it cautions against a situation in which the Department might become a remote supervisor. The Committee stresses that the concept of delegation of authority should not be compromised. The objective should be for the Department to centralize general policy setting and formulation of standards and guidelines while delegating full responsibility and accountability for day-to-day operational activities, including management of budgetary and staff resources.**

8. The Advisory Committee notes that the examination of the Department described in the report focused mainly on Headquarters. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the overseas duty stations had been consulted and that a draft of the report had been given to them for comment but that reform of those offices would be included in a second phase. **The Committee emphasizes that involvement of the overseas duty stations and the related legislative machinery is essential if reform is to be successful. The Committee recalls paragraph I.27 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, in which it emphasized the need for closer cooperation among all duty stations and the regional commissions in the use of conference-servicing resources.**

9. In this connection, the Advisory Committee was informed of the intention of the Secretariat to initiate a system-wide review of meeting schedules. The Committee welcomes this initiative and sees merit in the involvement of Member States in the exercise, with a view to optimizing the use of conference-servicing resources across all duty stations and the regional commissions.

10. In the report, the Secretary-General discusses a number of translation and interpretation issues (ibid., paras. 34-36). The Advisory Committee takes note of the statement in paragraph 36 that existing pay scales for contractual translation have not changed since 1995, putting the Organization in a position where it is less competitive with other bidders for translation services, as well as of the Secretary-General's intention to develop proposals to introduce a new rate scale so that the corps of contractual translators can be expanded. The Committee welcomes the Department's intention to explore the possibilities afforded by

electronic transmission of documentation to increase the use of off-site translators for the more time-sensitive documents, which heretofore have been handled by on-site translators only (freelance contractors based in their home countries have traditionally been employed only for documents with a long lead time). The new system is intended to reduce the need for freelance translators on site, thereby producing substantial savings in respect of travel and per diem. The Committee understands that practical arrangements, such as pay rates for such translators, are still to be worked out. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that, owing to the shortage of in-house translation resources, only random spot checks were conducted on the work of contractual translators. **The Committee is of the view that the implementation of the new system should be carefully monitored and that the expanded use of contractual and off-site translators should include provision for revision by in-house revisers.**

11. The Advisory Committee has noted a significant deterioration in the quality of translations in some languages. Upon request, the Committee was provided with an outline of factors affecting the quality of translations (see annex II). Among these was the fact that, owing to a high number of retirements and resignations in the Translation and Editorial Division as a whole, there is an imbalance between experienced staff and junior staff in some of the translation services. In addition, as mentioned in paragraph 10 above, some of the translation services have had problems attracting and retaining qualified staff owing to competition from other employers, such as the European Union, and this has, in some cases, led to high vacancy rates.

12. The Advisory Committee urges the Department to seek innovative solutions to the problem of the deteriorating quality of translation. **In particular, the Committee recommends a renewed commitment to training for both translators and interpreters.** In this connection, the Committee welcomes the re-establishment of the in-house interpreter training programme, as recommended by the Committee in its report of 16 October 2001 (A/56/475) and approved by the General Assembly in section IV, paragraph 3, of its resolution 56/242 of 24 December 2001. The Committee understands that ad hoc arrangements exist in the translation services to provide on-the-job training to promising candidates identified through informal in-service translation examinations. Such candidates are recruited as freelance translators for short periods, during which they undergo on-the-job training under close supervision with the aim of increasing their chances of success on United Nations competitive examinations for translators. **The Committee recommends that the Department look into the possibility of using national translation and interpretation institutions for training. The Committee requests that training programmes be clearly identified in future programme budget proposals.**

13. The Advisory Committee notes the information concerning current workload standards for interpreters, translators and text processors (ibid., annex I). The Committee also notes that the Committee on Conferences, in paragraphs 84 and 85 of its report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session[2] has requested the Secretary-General to update the standards, taking into account the best practices and experience of other bodies and organizations and drawing on expert advice as needed. In view of the fact that the current standards measure quantitative output only, the Committee on Conferences also invited the Secretary-General to develop further performance indicators in order to evaluate the quality of the functions performed.

14. The Advisory Committee was informed of the intention of the Secretary-General to abolish the Official Records Editing Section. As indicated in the report (A/57/289, annex II, para. 4; see also annex I below), a new Editorial, Terminology and Reference Service will be established through the integration of the Editorial Control Section and the Terminology and Reference Section. The plan includes strengthening the editing function through the redeployment of some editors from the Official Records Editing Section to the new Service. The concordance of the different language versions of draft resolutions, formerly performed after their adoption by editors in the Official Records Editing Section, would in future be performed prior to adoption by editors/translators redeployed from the former Official Records Editing Section to the translation services. **The Committee stresses the importance of retaining the concordance principle in order to ensure equally valid texts of resolutions in all six official languages.**

15. With respect to departmental plans for optimizing the use of technology (ibid., paras. 41-48), the

Advisory Committee notes with interest the plan of action described in paragraphs 42 and 43 for complete electronic processing of documents. The Committee was informed that the project mentioned in paragraph 44 to include online interactive capabilities in the new *Journal of the United Nations* had already been implemented. The Committee welcomes this development. As indicated in paragraph 47, a number of projects are under consideration for implementation in the context of the capital master plan. **The Committee requests that follow-up information on the status of implementation of those projects, including associated costs, be provided in the context of future reports of the Secretary-General on the pattern of conferences, as well as programme budget proposals.**

16. The Advisory Committee takes note of the statement that the productivity gains made by the electronic flow of documents would shift the work of text processors from typing to the more complex tasks of proof-reading, formatting and desktop publishing (ibid., annex I, para. 8).

17. The Advisory Committee takes note of the plan for upstream planning and the establishment of a slotting system for the processing of reports (ibid., paras. 53-56). **The Committee points out that a systematic analysis of all the reasons behind the delays in the issuance of documents would need to be carried out in order to improve upstream planning and make it effective. Moreover, with regard to the proposed slotting system, the Committee stresses that it will be necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures taken and adjust them accordingly in the light of experience.**

18. The report describes the background relating to the chronically late issuance of summary records (ibid., paras. 58-62). The suggestion is made in paragraph 61 that summary records could be replaced with digital sound recordings to be made available in all six official languages on the United Nations web site or at listening booths at the main conference centres where bodies entitled to summary records meet. The Advisory Committee notes that the Committee on Conferences, in paragraph 80 of its report,[2] has requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly no later than at its fifty-eighth session on possible ways of addressing the issue.

19. A number of innovations to decrease the distribution and reproduction of hard copies of documents are described in the report (A/57/289, paras. 63-66). Among these are the introduction of printing on demand, whereby documents in addition to the number initially distributed to missions and Secretariat staff are printed upon request, the direct shipping of documents printed externally to users outside Headquarters and the elimination of pouch or courier shipments of documents to duty stations that have the capability of downloading and printing their own copies from the Official Document System (ODS) or other United Nations databases. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Department did not intend to eliminate hard copies altogether. **In the view of the Committee, a survey of all missions should be conducted in order to ascertain their views on this matter, as well as to determine their capacity to receive and print electronic documents, after which a study should be undertaken to examine the cost-effectiveness of assisting missions lacking that capability to attain it. Clearly, before any measures are taken to reduce the number of documents to be distributed, all documents not distributed in hard copy must be available on demand on ODS, and the implementation of any new procedures should be carefully monitored, including their impact on the provision of services to Member States.**

20. The Advisory Committee takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the status of recruitment for the Interpretation Section at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (A/56/901) and the note by the Secretary-General on the simultaneous availability of parliamentary documentation in the six official languages on the United Nations web site (A/C.5/56/37).

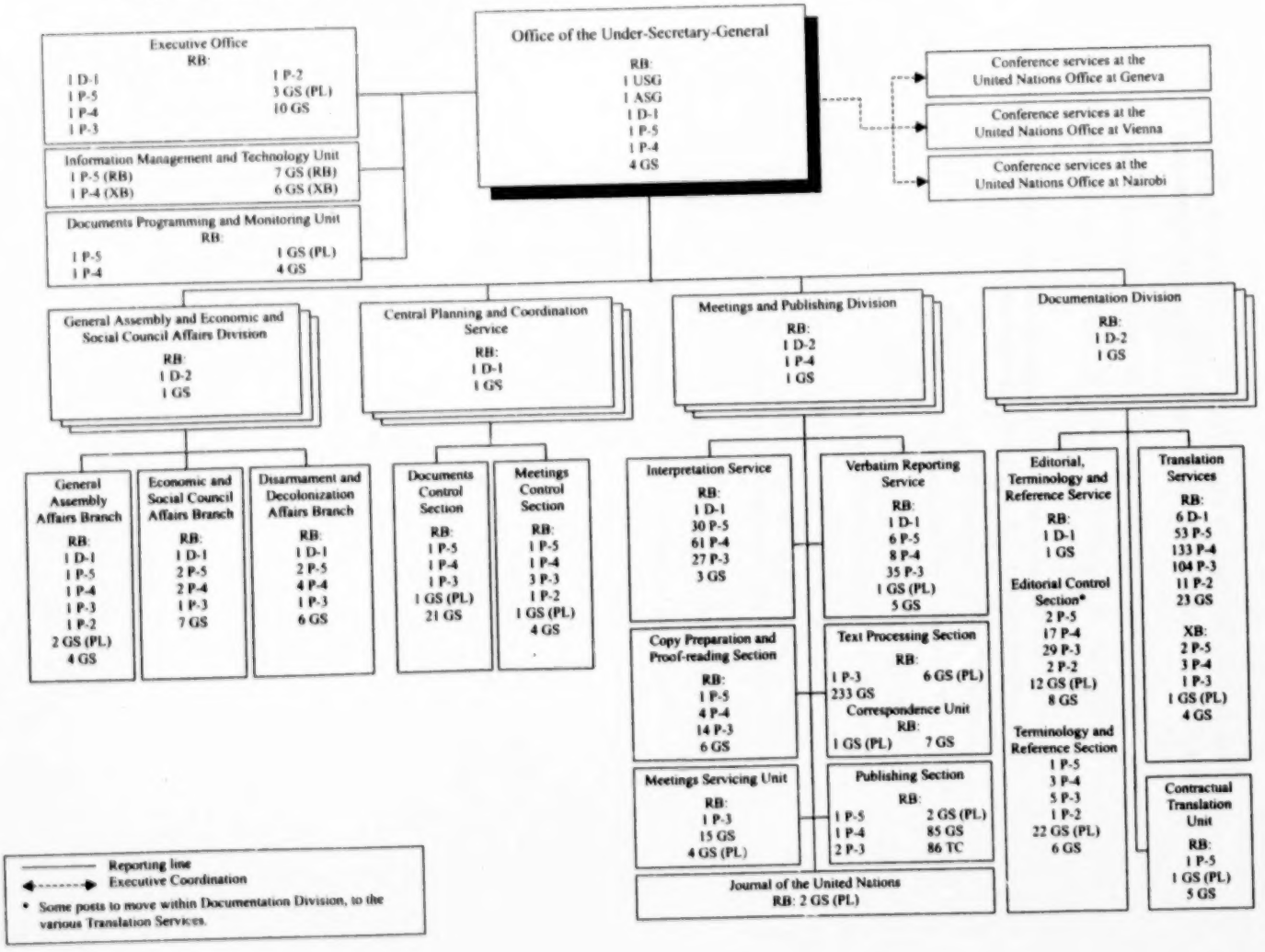
*Notes*

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 7* (A/56/7).

[2] Ibid., *Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/57/32).

## Annex I

# Department for General Assembly and Conference Management



# Annex II

## Problems affecting the quality of services in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management

- "Crisis-mode" operation (i.e., last-minute additions to the work programme)
- Insufficient or inaccurate workload projections (especially with regard to overnight processing of documentation)
- Inaccurate information on expected length of meetings (especially with regard to meeting services — précis writing, interpretation)
- Late submission of manuscripts
- Submission of lengthy manuscripts
- Inadequate information technology support
- Poor quality of manuscripts submitted
- Difficulty in attracting, recruiting and retaining qualified language staff
- Demographics of language services (i.e., departures of experienced staff owing to retirement and consequential imbalance between experienced and junior staff)
- Difficulty in finding staff who possess the required language combinations
- Limited supply of qualified local interpreters/translators

United Nations A/57/473

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 October 2002

Original: English

**Fifty-seventh session**
Agenda item 112
**Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003**

# Conversion into established posts of some temporary assistance posts financed under section 2 of the programme budget

## Report of the Secretary-General*

*Summary*

By paragraph 23 of its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, or no later than its fifty-seventh session, through the relevant intergovernmental and expert bodies, specific proposals for the conversion of some of the temporary assistant posts requested in section 2 of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 into established posts wherever that would measurably lead to higher efficiency and better quality of services. The Secretary-General will evaluate the situation in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, utilizing his review of the operational experience during the year 2002.

It is recommended that the General Assembly take note of the present report.

* The present report was prepared following consideration of the best modalities and timing for implementing the Secretary-General's proposals on improving the performance of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services (see A/57/289).

02-64028 (E) 171002

1. In the context of its review of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 at its forty-first session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination recommended to the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session proposals on the conversion of some temporary assistance funds requested in section 2 into established posts wherever that would lead to higher efficiency or to budgetary savings.[1]

2. By paragraph 83 of its resolution 56/253 of 24 December 2001, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, or no later than its fifty-seventh session, through the relevant intergovernmental and expert bodies, specific proposals for the conversion of some of the temporary assistant posts requested in section 2 into established posts wherever that would measurably lead to higher efficiency and better quality of services.

3. The measures introduced by the Secretary-General following the adoption by the General Assembly of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 and subsequent decisions adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 56/287 of 27 June 2002 have had a profound effect on the overall conference-servicing environment of the Organization. The situation has led to the need to evaluate the utilization of temporary assistance for meeting resources in the new environment, before proposals are made for conversion of such resources to established posts. It is anticipated that, should the evaluation support the conversion of resources, the necessary recommendations could be made in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

4. **It is recommended that the General Assembly take note of the present report.**

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/56/16), para. 71.